KH: Alice Madness Begins

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Hello all, Will be starting a crossover between Kingdom Hearts and American Mcgee's Alice. It will be based on the game with Sora, Donald and Goofy's involvement. Enjoy! Sora, Donald & Goofy Square-Enix Alice & Cheshire Cat Spicy Horse

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The Beginning

In the outskirts of London, there lived a well-off Victorian house away from the bustle and hustle of the city. Inside the house, it was what every Englsh house will have: antiques, carpets from the far East, glass cabinets, tea-sets made from the finest china, and a grandfather clock in the hallway. Upstairs was where all the residents of the house were slumbering after a tiring day. In one of these fine bedrooms, a girl of twelve was clutching to a patched doll rabbit; sleeping soundly. Her room was filled with toys, books, and dresses. In front of her sleeping form was a storybook, no doubt the girl fell asleep while she read and now dreamt of magical creatures and a mystifying world. How blissful she looks.

Then out of the blue, there was a sound of broken glass and after a few moments, the whole house was filled with toxic, black smoke. A small flame that escaped from a smashed oil-lamp caught onto the rich carpet and spread onto everything that was flammable. The girl was rudely awakened from her enchanted dream as she started to sweat and choked on the poisonous fumes.

Overcoming her sleepiness and disorientation, the girl opened her green eyes as she grasped what was going on. To her disbelief and shock, she herself in a flaming room, threatening to eat her in the flames. The girl threw off her duvets and fighting both flames and smokes, threw her bedroom door opened and rushed towards her parent's bedroom.

To her horror, the entire house was engulfed in flames. Desperate and fearful for the lives of her parents, she ran to the door and started banging and shouting.

'Mother! Father!'

Using all her might, she tried to open the door to her parent's bedroom but the door was locked from the inside. Before she could

find some other way to break the door down, she heard the voice of her father:

'Alice, go! Save yourself!'

Alice leaned against the door, straining to hear their voices. 'Father!'

'It's too late for us!' That was her mother's voice; pleading. 'Please Alice! Leave us! Save yourself! Always remember we love you!'

Those were the last words from her mother when Alice heard something smashed in the bedroom. Sobbing tears, she looked around but saw no way through this Hell when all of a sudden, she saw her pet black cat, Dinah, jumping outside through the window. Knowing what to do, Alice was about to follow her cat but hesitated. She could not bear to abandon her family. Before she could decide whether to flee or stay, a flaming beam fell at the entrance to her parent's bedroom; blocking any entry to the room. Seeing no other options, Alice jumped out of the window before the flames could claim her life.

Alice fell face first onto the grass as fresh air flowed through her system. Using what remaining strength she had left from her nightmarish moment and grief, she dragged herself away from the inferno until she was at a safe distance. Alice could only stare at the destruction that transpired in front of her very eyes. Amiss from all the excitement, Alice noticed she was holding onto her rabbit doll the entire time. Alice continue to gaze at the dancing flames eat away what remains of the house and dead bodies.

Then like a demented banshee, Alice screamed her lungs out: howling her pain and grief throughout the night.

Ten years later.

'That takes care of that.' A boy with spiky, brown hair said as he steered the Gummi ship. 'I didn't realize there were that many

Heartless in Traverse Town.'

'A-hyuk!' a dog-like person said. 'You certainly show them, Sora.'

'You said it!' a duck agreed with Goofy.

'Thanks guys!' Sora said, rubbing his thumb underneath his nose. 'Now let get home so we can treat ourselves to a… Hey! Isn't that Wonderland?'

Sore steered the Gummi ship closer to a world which was surrounded by a dark aura. Wonderland was the first world where he had his first adventure with Donald and Goofy. It was the home of many queer animals and wacky places. Most importantly, it was where Alice, one of the seven Princesses of Heart and Sora's friend, resided.

'Gosh', Goofy said worriedly. 'I wonder what happened?'

'Could it be Heartless?' Donald asked.

'No idea', Sora replied as he gunned down the engines. 'But we better take a look. Something terrible must have happened to Alice.'

And like a falling star, the Gummi ship made a fast descent on Wonderland.

'What happened to this place?' Donald asked as his webbed feet planted on Wonderland's soil.

'Beats me.' Was Sora's only answer.

'Maybe we can ask somebody?' Goofy suggested. He shivered. 'Gosh! I don't remember Wonderland being like this!'

To all of them, Wonderland was a beautiful world with oversized flowers, trees, living creatures and inhabitants. It was a world full of green lands and blue skies. Now it was a dreadful place with no

signs of living or beauty. There was an aura of evil surrounding the area where Sora and his two friends stood.

'I guess this is the bad lands of Wonderland.' Sora replied as he looked around. 'There must be somewhere where there is a lot of people.'

'Hey look!' Donald pointed. Sora and Goofy looked to where Donald was pointing to and saw a tall fortress with ramparts and an opened gate.

'I wonder who lives there?' Sora asked.

'Who cares!' Donald cried. 'Maybe he can help us!'

Without waiting for the others, Donald bolted towards the fortress.

'Donald!' Goofy cried as he joined Donald. 'Wait up!'

'Wait for me!' Sora cried as he took the lead.

Together, they raced towards the fortress. Very soon, Sora was the first one to hurtle through the gates and stopped in a screech. Donald and Goofy were just behind him, panting heavily.

'What is this place?' Sora wondered.

'Beats me', Goofy wheezed. 'But its kind of Spooky.'

The fortress was dark and gloomy with walls made of brown bricks; covered with spiders' cobwebs and sickly green fogs. In the main hall of the fortress were many wooden doors, obviously leading to other sections of the fortress. Once in a while, our three heroes could have sworn they heard the cackling and chuckling of children. Even the merest sounds made them shivered.

'I don't like this place!' Goofy declared.

'Me too!' Donald said shakily.

'Come on you two', Sora said impatiently. 'Let get to the bottom of this.'

Mustering their courage, Donald and Goofy moved their shaking legs as Sora opened one of the doors. It led them to an empty and dreary classroom with desks and chairs in disorderly rows. The desks and chairs were crooked, dirty, unvarnished, chipped or broken. On the blackboard was a crude drawing of a headless person. What was the most unique feature of the classroom was the fact that it was covered in blood.

'Looks like a dissection project gone haywire', Sora commented, trying to lighten up the dark mood. 'Right guys?'

'What kind of school is this?' Donald asked.

To answer his question, something was peeking at them behind of the doors. When Goofy noticed it, he went closer to the figure with Sora and Donald behind him. Imagine their horror and disgust when the thing jumped in front of them, revealing it to be a topless child with a creepy smile and completely bald. With an insane laugh, the child ran to the opposite direction.

'YIKES!' Donald cried with a jump. 'Let's get out of here!'

Despite being a small fellow and a mage, Donald pushed both Sora and Goofy out of the classroom and into the next room. The next room was filled with shelves full of books in rows. There were tables and chairs in the center of the room and portraits hanging on the wall. Thankfully, this room was not coverd in blood like the classroom.

'Gosh!' Goofy exclaimed. 'This must be the library.'

'I wonder what kind of books do they have in store here.' Sora said.

'No time for browsing!' Donald snapped. 'We have to get out of here!'

Donald pushed them around the corner and bumped into somebody, or something. To be exact, it was a pack of cards.

'Hey who goes there?' one of them shouted.

'Uh-oh!' Donald said.

'It's the Queen's guards!' Goofy gasped.

Sora looked up. 'Er… guys? Have you ever seen the Queen's guards this grumpy?'

Indeed, the Card Guards were more menacing looking than before with heavy brows and frowns on their faces.

'Now that you mentioned it', Donald said slowly, peering closely into them. 'Shouldn't they be a bit goofy looking?'

'Of course not! Cause I'm Goofy!' Goofy said jokingly. 'A-hyuk!'

'Silence!' one of the cards ordered. 'You all are hereby under arrest for trespassing in the halls of education and being in league with the one responsible of corrupting this land!'

The three of them were rudely lifted up and were pointed with spears from the back. 'Is this is a school', Goofy said, wincing from the poke. 'Then where is the cafeteria?'

'And what do you mean we are in league with the person who is destroying Wonderland?' Sora asked. 'We just got here.'

'That is for the Queen of Hearts to decide!' the guard said roughly. 'Now I want you to march and I want no trouble from you or you will be having holes in your…'

Before the captain of the guards could finish, his top part of the body slid down onto the floor: blood sprouted from his lower half. Everybody stared at the cut card and the person who was responsible for the killing. It was a young woman with long, brunette

hair and green, eyes. She was about Sora's height, very skinny and pale. She wore a blue color Victorian-style with a white apron sewn to it. A knife covered in blood, obviously from the captain of the guards, was resting in her hand.

'Seized her!' one of the cards screamed.

Forgetting Sora, Donald and Goofy for a moment, the cards charged: screaming and raising their spears. With speed of a leopard and grace of a butterfly, the woman dodged the entire spear thrusts. In retaliation, the woman swung her knife in arcs: hitting it marks. Within seconds, the floor was covered with bodies cut in half or headless corpses. The woman stood among the dead bodies, holding a bloody knife and wearing a demonic smile on her face.

All this time, Sora and his two friends just stood there; witnessing the bloodshed and the prowess the woman showed. Yet, despites her cold-blooded killing, there was something familiar about her. Finally overcoming his shock, Sora strode forward.

'Er…' he began awkwardly. 'Thanks for saving us. Do you happen to know a young girl? With blonde, long hair and blue eyes? Her name is…'

At that exact moment, the young woman turned her attention to Sora. Both of them looked at each other in the eyes for a long time. Despite the color green in the young woman's eyes, Sora immediately recognized them.

'Alice?' he said in disbelief.

Behind Sora, both Donald and Goofy looked at each other in confusion. 'Alice?'

The young woman, or Alice, grinned demonically. 'It had been a long time, Sora.'

'Alice?' Sora asked, still not believing. 'Is that really you? B-but your hair…'

Alice's smile vanished and a serious face replaced it. She stroked her brown hair. 'People changed, Sora.' She said casually. 'I just happened to be going through a difficult time. By the way, what are you doing here?'

'It just so happens we were passing through Wonderland', Goofy answered as he walked next to Sora. 'When we saw the dark aura surrounding Wonderland, we thought we come and investigate.'

'What happened here?' Donald asked as he overcame his fear and joined them.

'The Queen of Hearts had taken advantage of my absence and had warped Wonderland into this monstrosity.' Alice answered with venom. Sora flinched at that tone. 'I was following Rabbit but I needed a potion to make me small.'

'If that the case', Sora said. 'Want us to tag along? You could do with some help.'

'No!' Alice said bluntly. 'I have everything under control thank you very much. You best get out of here before something happen to you.'

Sora was about to protest when Alice placed her knife at Sora's throat. 'I'm no longer the Alice you knew. Not weak, unreliable Alice. I can take care of myself.'

Alice released her knife from Sora's throat and walked deeper into the library; leaving Sora stunned and mindlessly rubbing his throat.

'Was that really Alice?' Donald asked.

'The one and only.'

Sora, Donald and Goofy spun around, looking for the source of the voice. Appearing in front of the group was a grey, scrawny cat with golden rings pierced in its' ears and wearing a frightening grin.

'Welcome back, Hero of the Light.' It said.

Sora shook his head to focus. 'The Cheshire cat? What happened to you?'

'Maybe somebody didn't feed him milk.' Goofy suggested.

'I detest the white juice that comes from a cow', the Cheshire cat said airily. 'As for what happened, the corruption of Wonderland what changed me.'

'You mean the Queen of Hearts did this to you?' Sora asked.

'She plays a role in it', the cat replied. 'But there is another responsible: Seek out Alice. Ignored her wish and follow her. Remember, you won't get if you don't ask.'

With a devilish grin, the Cheshire cat vanished.

'Does that means we have to go after Alice?' Goofy asked.

'Do we have to?' Donald asked.

Sora took a deep breath and squared his shoulders. 'Come on guys. We had faced danger and we always managed to get through it.'

Both Donald and Goofy nodded. 'We sure did.'

Sora turned towards them, smiling. 'If we work together as we always do, I know we can do this! So, ready for another adventure?'

'Yeah!' Donald and Goofy yelled in unison.

Together, the three friends raced after Alice.

A Friend in Need

'Now let see…' Alice whispered as she was reading an ancient book. 'To make the shrinking elixir, I will need mushrooms, poppies, sugar and spices. I wasn't expecting the ingredients to be that simple…'

'Alice!'

Alice stopped her musing as Sora, Donald and Goofy stopped before her, panting heavily. They had been running around the library looking for her. Alice frowned as she closed the book.

'I thought I told you I don't need your help?'

Sora grinned as he straightened up. 'There's no harm in joining in for an adventure. Besides, a certain feline advise us to tag along.'

'Damn that cat', Alice swore. 'He had to involve other people into this mess.'

'You mentioned you need to get smaller', Sora interjected. 'Why?'

'I don't know how Rabbit did it', Alice explained as she place the book back to it original place. 'But he shrank to the size of a mouse and disappeared through a crack. That cat told me to follow him; claiming he can show me what is happening to Wonderland.'

'Therefore, I need some ingredients to mix the shrinking elixir.'

'Mushrooms, poppies, sugar and spices.' Donald recited.

'That sounds nice.' Goofy added.

Alice scowled. 'Too nice.'

'If we come with you, we can find those ingredients in no time', Sora said. 'Then you can find Rabbit and restore Wonderland to the way it

was.'

'It's going to be very dangerous if you join me.' Alice warned.

'Puh-leeze..' Sora rolled his eyes. 'I have been facing danger when I first left Destiny Island. I eat Heartless almost everyday.'

'The Queen's minions are nothing like the Heartless.' Alice said.

'Then I take the risk', Sora said carelessly. 'Besides, you need a good sword, I mean Key-Blade, to protect your back.'

Alice pondered a bit and sighed. 'Don't say I didn't warn you.'

'All right, we should head to the school cafeteria. We should be able to find sugar and spices in the kitchen.'

'Oh goody!' Goofy exclaimed.

'Although the mushrooms and poppies can only be found in the school gardens.' Alice frowned. 'That's means we have to fight through more guards.'

'No need', Goofy suddenly said as he bent lower to a bench and lifted it up. Underneath it were a group of mushrooms.

'A-hyuk! Fungi.'

Sora stared at Goofy. 'Goofy, how did you know there were mushrooms underneath that bench?'

Goofy poked his nose. 'I have a pig of a nose.' He said jokingly.

'That's one ingredient', Alice said as she gently picked one of the mushroom and dropped it in her pouch. 'We still have three more to collect.'

'If I remember correctly', Alice continued. 'I just passed through the cafeteria. It's just outside of the library.'

'Oh boy, oh boy, oh boy!' Donald cried rubbing his palms together. 'I wonder what they serve?'

'Probably brain juice and intestines pie.' Alice casually said before exiting the library.

Donald just stood there, debating whether to take her seriously or not. Sora grabbed his feathered hand and dragged him along.

'Come on', he said. 'We will probably find out for ourselves.'

'There', Alice said as she poured some sugar in a small flask. 'That should be enough sugar to make our special pot of tea.'

'Tea?' Donald asked as he helped Sora find some spices. 'I thought we're mixing an elixir?'

'I was speaking metaphorically.'

'Oh.'

'Here we go!' Sora said as he closed the cap to the bottle that contained the spices. 'Cinnamon and nutmeg all in one!'

Alice nodded. 'Just one more to go.'

While they were searching for the required ingredients, Goofy was scooping around for something to eat. 'Let see now… nope! Not in here… There must something nice to… Ha ah! I found some…'

Goofy pulled out a half-torn body of an infant. There were looks of revulsion on each person face. Goofy slowly put the corpse back where he found it.

'Gosh!' he tried to say with his usual goofiness but was a bit shaken. 'I just lost my appetite.'

'Let's get out of here', Sora said softly and everybody exit the cafeteria. Nobody spoke about the previous encounter, although Alice was more composed than the others.

'We still need to get to the Greenhouse.' she broke the silence. 'It just up ahead.'

Just as they rounded at the next corner, they encountered more Cards Guards.

'Intruders!' one of them shouted. 'Get 'em!'

'Here they come!' Sora cried as he charged, raising his key-blade. The others followed behind him. There were twenty of them so Sora's party was heavily outnumbered. Sora swung his key-blade in every direction, blocking spears or axes blows or thrusting his key-blade into the Card Guards and shooting rays of light to dissolve the guards. Donald was incinerating any card guards who were foolish to be in front of his wand while Goofy rammed his shield into a pack of cards, knocking them off their feet.

As for Alice, she was slicing through the Card Guards like cutting through butter. She moved at such ferocious speed and her strikes always find her mark. Every time she killed one of the guards, she released a maniacally laugh that echoed throughout the corridor. After dispatching his eighth opponent, Sora could only stand there, staring as Alice performed her dance of death.

It had been only less than five minutes that the floor was littered with corpses and covered in blood. All of the Card Guards were dead except for one whose legs were badly burned by Donald's fire and desperately tried to escape. Alice quickly strode towards him and turned him over to face her.

'N-o…' the guard stammered tearfully. 'P-lease…'

Without wasting a word, Alice stabbed the guard in the forehead and if that was not enough, continue to stab him several times. Sora,

Donald and Goofy cringed every time Alice's blade sinks deeper into the head. Unable to take it no more, Sora firmly placed a hand on Alice's shoulder and pulled her off the already dead guard; making her fall on her backside. Like a cat, Alice sprung on her feet, glaring at Sora.

'Why the hell did you do that for?' she shouted.

Sora folded his arms. 'There was no need to butcher him. In fact, there was no need to even kill him! He was legless for goodness sake!'

Alice strode towards Sora until their noses were almost touching each other. Both Donald and Goofy looked worried at the confrontation.

'You', she hissed. 'Have no right to judge me! Does it never occur to you that injured he may be, he can still called for reinforcement and that will slow us down! It's better that he is dead!'

'But he didn't deserve to die like that', Sora argued. Then he gestured at the dead bodies. 'They don't deserve this… this slaughter! The Alice I knew would never hurt a fly, let alone commit a genocide!'

'Oh', Alice raised an eyebrow and replied sarcastically. 'So you expect me to wear a silly skirt, skipped around like an idiot and have tea parties with my friends? Well too bad! I can't! Because all of my friends are bloody dead or turned into monstrosities that I can't even describe!'

Sora's expression softens when he heard that last statement. 'Alice…'

Alice turned her back on Sora before he could say anything. 'Now if you excuse me, I have a land to save. You don't need to come if you don't want to: it's not like I ask for your help in the first place.'

Alice stomped straight to the Greenhouse, leaving Sora, Donald and Goofy behind. Sora just stood there with his head downwards, almost regretting his words.

Donald and Goofy walked closer to him, uncertain. 'Sora…'

'She is right', Sora muttered bitterly. 'Who am I to judge?'

'Sometimes asking for another person's opinion can be a boon.'

Not surprised, Sora turned towards the Cheshire cat who just appeared between two corpses: licking his paw.

'What made Alice into this?' Sora asked the grinning feline. 'I can't believe this sudden change of Wonderland could transform an innocent girl into a psychopathic murderer.'

'If you must know,' the Cheshire cat purred. 'Alice and Wonderland are connected in a way. Whatever effect the other, the counterpart will also suffer.'

Sora looked at the Cheshire cat. 'What do you mean they are connected?'

The cat's horrific grin widens. 'I believe that is a story for another time.'

Suddenly, there was a scream coming from the Greenhouse.

'Alice!' Sora suddenly shouted.

'Ah,' the Cheshire cat casually said. 'It looks like the damsel in distress is calling for her knight in shining armour.'

'Come on guys!' Sora cried to the other two as they hurried to the Greenhouse. When they reached the greenhouse, they were shocked to see two legs sticking out of a giant Venus flytrap.

'Donald!'

'Gotcha!' Donald cried in response as he pointed his wand to the plant. The Venus flytrap suddenly caught fire but still did not release Alice.

'Let me try!' Goofy shouted and flung his shield like a Frisbee. The shield flew towards the giant plant's neck and sliced it off, making its' heavy head fall to the ground. Sora quickly prised the head opened with his key-blade. Lying inside the mouth was Alice, covered in plant saliva but alive.

Sora gently lifted her out of the plant and laid her where the floor was clean. Nodding to Donald, Donald pointed his wand at Alice and water sprouted from it; washing the substance away from Alice and waking her up.

'What,' she murmured as the water cleared her mind and she slowly opened her eyes. It widened in surprise when she saw Sora. 'Sora? What are you doing here? I thought you…'

'Thought you could use some help with "Mr Green" here.' Sora grinned.

'I was doing fine!' Alice snapped, standing up. 'I was about to get myself out of there before you guys came in!'

'A-hyuk!' Goofy exclaimed. 'Is this the poppy you wanted Alice?'

Alice glanced at the red flower Goofy was holding. 'Yes and I will take that thank you!' She snatched the plant away from Goofy and popped into a small pouch with the other ingredients. 'Well, I will see you.'

Alice walked passed Sora and the other two and headed towards the exit.

'Alice, wait!'

Alice stopped when Sora called her name.

'You were right,' he began. 'I have no right to judge you. I don't know what you had been through but it must be… terrible for you. I have no right to lecture you like that.'

'However, I am still your friend. Even if you have changed so drastically, you're still the Alice I knew and like. I still want to help you.'

There was a silence in the greenhouse before Alice said, 'Looked, I don't have time for your sympathy. I have a world to save.' She continued walking towards the exit. Sora exchanged looks with Donald and Goofy, not knowing what to say.

Alice suddenly stopped at the exit and looked over her shoulders. 'Well, what are you waiting for? Are you guys coming or not?'

That statement took the three boys by surprise. 'Well… err… Of course!'

'Wait for us!' Goofy cried.

Sora, Donald and Goofy have to double their effort to keep up with Alice.

'Gosh,' Goofy said as he knelt to inspect a crack on the wall. 'He must be a very small rabbit to able to get through there.'

'In Wonderland, anything is possible.' Alice airily said as she stirred the gathered ingredients together. Sora was holding a small pot for her. 'There, this elixir should make us the size of that crack. Are you ready?'

'We sure are!' Sora, Donald and Goofy chorused in unison.

Alice sprayed the elixir all over them and immediately they shrank to a size of a mouse. They ran into the crack and after walking what seems like hours, they saw light at the end of the tunnel. As they

exited the tunnel, they were greeted with pale sunlight, the smell of nature and the cool breeze.

They were in the Wonderland Woods.

It's a Small World After All

'Well', Sora began when the group stepped outside of the tunnel. 'Not the Wonderland I knew but much more better than that fortress.'

As the group stepped out of the tunnel, they found themselves in the Wonderland Woods. It was extremely cloudy and foggy that only a few rays of sunlight managed to penetrate the thick walls of the floating, grey clouds. There were splashing of small waterfalls everywhere and the sound of buzzing insects. Before them, there stood a high cliff.

'Looks like we have a long way.' Alice muttered as she scanned the cliff.

'Look!' Goofy cried, pointing towards the cliff. They all saw something white running up a path along the cliff's face. Just then, the Cheshire cat appeared.

'Rabbit's anxiety pollutes his reasoning. He begs you back to this

Hellhole, then abandons you. Stop looking for good sense here. Settle for any!'

'That means, "Just continue pursuing Rabbit no matter what his reasons are".' Alice translated to Sora.

'That's pretty much it.' The cat purred before vanishing.

'Come on,' Donald said. 'Let's follow Rabbit.'

'Not so fast, Donald.' Sora said alertly. 'I think we have company…'

Sora pointed at the top of the cliff where ants wearing uniforms and carrying bayonets were stationed.

'More of the queen's minions.' Alice said. 'Looks like we have to clear a path.'

'A-hyuk! Leave it to me!' Goofy said as he arched his hand backward and threw his shield. The shield flew straight into the guarding ants, knocking all of them into the water. The shield returned back to Goofy's hand.

'Nice trick!' Donald praised.

'Thanks!' Goofy smiled. 'Learned it when playing fetch with Pluto.'

'Let's go!' Alice declared and began climbing up the cliff. The others followed her. It took them just some time before all of them reached the top. Alice was about to join the others when she accidentally put her weight on a weak rock, causing it to crumble before her. Alice would have fallen to her death if Sora had not grabbed her arm. He quickly pulled her up.

'Are you okay?' he asked.

'Besides my heart beating from fear, no.' Alice answered. 'Thanks.'

Sora smiled and helped Alice on her feet. They continued onward until they reached a small pool with a statue of a crying Alice. Near the bank was a figure that was crying. It had the head of a cow and soft body of a turtle. Instead of a shell, it was wearing a white diaper. It was none other than the Mock Turtle, one of Alice's friends. The group approached the sobbing reptile.

'What's all this then? Did someone die? Have you lost your family?' Alice asked. Sora, Donald and Goofy flinched at the abrupt tone Alice used.

'No, my shell!' the Mock Turtle wailed. 'The Duchess stole it and tried to eat me for lunch! Nobility must be served, I suppose…'

'Stop that wailing, won't you?' Alice sternly said.

Sora placed his hand on Alice's shoulders and whispered. 'Alice, maybe you could be more sympathetic.'

'Yeah!' Donald defended the Mock Turtle. 'He almost died!'

The Mock Turtle acknowledge Donald with a nod and turned to Alice. 'You're very cold blooded for a mammal. I was almost soup!'

Alice dusted Sora's hand off her shoulders. 'Tragic, I'm sure, but we're a bit pressed for time. Have you seen a Rabbit?'

The Mock Turtle stopped his sobbing and thoughtfully remembered, 'Hmmm… twitchy nose, shifty eyes… constantly consults his pocket watch? Most peculiar beast.'

'Well, he's very dear to me. I must find him.' Alice responded.

'Caterpillar could help, I'm quite certain. He knows everything there is to know.' The Mock Turtle suggested.

'And where does that smushy lay-about hang his hookah these days?' Alice inquired.

'Since the troubles began, he's in hiding. I couldn't divulge the Secret. I couldn't risk telling you, without… something in return.'

Alice rolled her eyes. 'Risk nothing, gain nothing.' She simply said.

The Mock Turtle nodded, 'His whereabouts, then, for my shell. The Duchess won't part with it willingly, though.'

'Don't worry!' Sore interjected. 'We will get your shell back! After all, the Duchess is a friend of Alice.'

Alice raised an eyebrow to Sora. 'After what happened to Wonderland, I think she had severed that tie.'

'Then follow me!' The Mock Turtle gestured to the others to follow him. He stepped onto a giant floating leaf and the others did the

same. Soon, the leaf floated downwards by the river currents.

As they cruised on the giant leaf, they passed through giant plants and sailed down small waterfalls. Donald had to use an invisibility spell so the patrolling Ant soldiers would not detect the group. They soon stopped at a bank where there was a strong smell of pepper in the air.

'The Duchess is near', the Mock Turtle stated. 'I'll wait here while you get my shell. I wish you all the best of luck!' Then he disappeared into the overgrown grass.

'Coward!' Alice hissed.

'I don't blame him.' Sora trying to reasoned. 'He almost got eaten.'

Alice did not bothered to reply back and strode towards the smell of pepper. Sora shrugged to Donald and Goofy and quickly followed her. They reached a small, rundown house where the smell of pepper was strong in the air.

'This must be it.' Sora whispered. Alice nodded and approached the door. Suddenly, a lizard that keeps changing colours appeared before them.

'Hello there!' the lizard greeted the party. 'Bill Mcgill, at your service, but you can call me Larry… or not. Have any brandy?'

'Err…' Sora uncertainly pondered. 'No, we're underage.'

'We only have our wits.' Alice replied. 'We're here to see the Duchess.'

'Impossible!' Bill cried. 'She only see those who doesn't wish to see her!'

Goofy scratched his head. 'That doesn't make sense.'

'It's perfect!' Bill confirmed. 'She is hiding from the queen, who wants her head. Ruined me home and built this monstrosity! Mad as a monkey mash and just as tasteless. No matter… we all be dead anyway. You sure you have no brandy?'

'Well we're not leaving without the Mock Turtle's shell!' Sora firmly stated, ignoring Bill's question.

'Won't you?' Bill asked curiously. 'If you insist, I might as well join you. I own her bad turn myself. Follow me.'

Bill led the party to the front door when it suddenly opened by itself. Bill ran away screaming as the house sucked Alice, Sora, Donald and Goofy into it. Once they were inside, they found themselves in a giant kitchen where pots and pans hung on the walls and a vile odor of meat and liver was still in the air. Flasks containing spices and oils sat on top of a table and the fireplace was giving a fierce temperature.

'Now I know what Hell feels like', Alice commented as she picked herself up from the floor.

Sora sniffed the air and wrinkled his nose. 'Urgh! Now I know what Bill meant when he said the Duchess is tasteless. Does she even know how to cook?'

'I can very well!' the fireplace suddenly burst into a small flame and a tall woman wearing a kitchen apron and holding a pepper-grinder jumped out of it. 'Mm… four delicacies! You all will make a fine meal… if seasoned properly!'

'We're not edible!' Sora nervously assured the Duchess.

'Not a full meal but a snack will do!' the Duchess said, licking her lips. 'I always wanted to try my two new recipes: Roast Duck stuffed with pig intestines and Dog Kebab glazed with the blood of raccoon!'

'Quack!' Donald hid behind Goofy while Goofy hid behind his own shield.

Alice bravely stepped forward. 'We will have the turtle's shell, you disgusting ogre!'

'Over my dead body!' the Duchess snorted.

'I will try to accommodate you.' Alice retorted.

'Alice', Sora whispered to Alice. 'You're not really planning to kill her? She is your friend.'

Alice looked fiercely into Sora's eyes. 'Look, it either we walked out of here with the shell or end up as a meal.'

Sora thought over it and finally nodded. Then he looked up. 'Look out!' He dropped both himself and Alice to the floor as knives flew just above their heads. Nodding her thanks to Sora, Alice sprinted to her feet with Sora following her. Before they could reach the Duchess, the Duchess spins her pepper grinder and sprayed pepper into the air. Before the cloud of pepper could go into their noses, Sora and Alice ducked behind the table. The Duchess laughed maniacally as she continued spraying the pepper like a flamethrower.

'Damn it!' Alice cursed. 'We're getting nowhere if we continue like this!'

'This calls for some magic!' Sora cried as he turned to Donald who was hiding behind another table with Goofy. 'Donald, Aeroga on three!'

'Gotcha!' Donald cried back. Goofy shielded Donald from the pepper as Donald pointed his wand towards the Duchess. Sora did the same thing with his Key-blade.

'Aeroga!'

A strong gust of wind erupted from both Sora's key-blade and Donald's wand, blowing the pepper back to the Duchess. The pepper entered into the Duchess huge nose causing her to sneeze uncontrollably. The Duchess gave a loud and hard sneeze that she sneezed her brains out and her head exploded. She collapsed onto the floor, surrounded in a pool of blood.

Sora and Donald looked at each other in horror at what they had done. Alice placed her hand on his shoulder.

'If it make you feel better', she consoled. 'She was about to eat us and you didn't kill her, it was the pepper.'

Sora could only nodded silently as Alice retrieved the shell from one of the kitchen cabinet.

'Now let get out of this hellhole!'

'Hold on!' Goofy protested as he was licking his fingers. 'This stuff taste great!'

Goofy was eating from a jar that looked like sausages. Donald looked at it and almost vomited. Sora turned to Alice.

'Do you know what is he eating?'

Alice just glanced at the jar and shrugged. 'I have no idea.'

'At least my shell is in tolerable condition.' The Mock Turtle remarked as he put on his shell.

As the group exited the house, Bill Mcgill and the Mock Turtle greeted them. The Mock Turtle happily put his shell back onto his body while Bill grumbled about rebuilding his house.

'A simple "thank you" would have been nice,' Alice admonished. 'I kept my part of the bargain, Turtle.'

'Fair enough,' the Mock Turtle acknowledged. 'I'll take you on a trip. Hover around my bubbles.'

Then he dived into the river, leaving a trail of bubbles. Alice was about to follow when she noticed Donald hesitating. 'What's the matter with you?'

Donald shook at the water. 'I can't swim!'

Alice placed her hands on her hips and scowled, 'You're kidding me? You're a duck and you can't swim?'

'Well… kind of… Quack!' Donald suddenly felt something grabbing both his hands and getting lifted up. Sora was on his left while Goofy was on his right.

'Come on Donald,' Sora said as he and Goofy brought Donald nearer to the river. 'With us together, you have no fear of drowning.'

'Yeah! A-hyuk!' Goofy joined in. 'There's nothing like teamwork!'

'Wait! Wait!' Donald cried but was too late. He was plunged into the water with the other two, causing a giant ripple in the water.

Alice looked at the ripples and murmured to herself. 'Teamwork…'

She shook her head and dived into the water.

The group followed closely behind the Mock Turtle: his bubbles giving them air to breath underwater. They swam through pillars of rocks; plants and fish that were not yet corrupted my Wonderland's poison. Unlike above, underwater was tranquil and made the group forget about Wonderland's dilemma. When the Mock Turtle ascended, the group followed him. As soon as they reached the surface, they breathe in the fresh air with relief. As soon as they crawled to the riverbank, they found themselves in the darker area of the woods.

'That wasn't so bad.' Sora grinned.

'A-hyuk!' Goofy agreed as he shook the water from his body, doggie-style. 'We saw a lot of pretty fish!'

'What about you Donald?' Sora asked.

As soon as Donald dried off, he jumped up and down, shaking his fist at Sora and Goofy and throwing a tantrum. Behind them was the Mock Turtle who was waving his farewell before diving back into the water.

Alice squeezed the water out of her apron before saying, 'Rabbit should be nearby. Come on!'

Sora, Donald and Goofy quickly followed Alice. It was only a few minutes walking before they stopped in front of a small figure with white fur, long ears, wearing a black hat and a red coat with a golden pocket-watch hanging to it.

It was Rabbit.

A Game of Chess

Rabbit peered at the group. 'You lot took your sweet time.'

Sora was indignant. 'What do you mean? You're the one running off!'

'Yeah!' Donald agreed.

'It's not like we can shrink to the size of an ant.' Goofy put in.

'We had our reasons.' Alice calmly said.

'Forget reasons!' Rabbit yelled. 'There are useless here! Caterpillar is waiting!'

Alice folded her arms. 'I remember him well. Thin-skinned. Ill-tempered. Smokes too much. Disagreeable smell. Why do I need him?'

'Aren't you being a bit too harsh on caterpillar?' Sora whispered to Alice.

Alice ignored Sora,

'No one's wiser in Wonderland.' Rabbit replied. 'Only he knows what you must do to save us. Now, follow closely. The way is treacherous. We have so far to go, and so little time to get there.'

Rabbit hopped on. Alice mumbled, 'Just like old times: follow the white rabbit.'

Alice, Sora and Donald followed Rabbit. Goofy stayed behind and scratched his head.

'I thought it's follow the yellow brick road?'

The group had been going for hours and they have not encounter a single enemy. The sky was still grey and gloomy and the vegetation became more brownish and sinister, as if something was sucking the life out of the lands. The only things that the group heard were their breathing, footsteps and the distant sounds of waterfalls. There were no sounds of birds, insects or beasts.

The silence unsettled Rabbit. He turned to the group, 'This silence is disturbing. Caterpillar is just beyond the clearing. I suggest we sacrifice stealth for speed.'

All of them nodded and Rabbit dashed off. They were about to run after him when suddenly, they felt the earth moving. They looked up and saw a giant green-skinned man wearing a top, black hat and carrying a cane stomping all over the place.

'Hey!' Goofy said, pointing at the giant's face. 'Isn't that the Mad Hatter?'

'What used to be the Mad Hatter.' Alice answered. To their horror, Rabbit and the Mad Hatter were going to get into each other way: with devastating effect.

'RABBIT!' Sora shouted. 'LOOKED OUT!'

Too late: the Mad Hatter stepped on the white body of Rabbit, twist his footing and continued on.

'NO!' Sora cried as the group ran to rabbit: who was flattened like a pancake into the ground. Alice fell to her knees and sobbed uncontrollably.

'Everyone I loved died violently… unnaturally!' she sobbed. 'I am cursed! Why go on? I'll only hurt others…'

'It's not your fault!' Sora comforted her, pulling her to her feet. 'There was nothing we could have done!'

Alice shook his hands away from her. 'Easy for you to say!' she snapped. 'You didn't lose anyone you cared about!'

Sora was taken aback by her words. Just before he could say anything, the Cheshire Cat appeared. 'The boy is correct. No time for self-pity. Evade these savage soldiers and seek Caterpillar.'

He disappeared. Alice wiped her tears away. 'Damn cat!' she cursed before stomping off. Sora looked at the dead Rabbit.

'Alice, wait! We should at least bury Rabbit first!'

Alice stopped in her tracks and looked back. There was shame written on her face. 'You're right.'

Goofy dug a small grave using his shield and Sora and Alice gently placed the flattened body into it. Donald used Graviga to levitate the earth to cover Rabbit's body. The group stood in a silence of respect before Alice broke it.

'I'm sorry I snapped at you.' She indicated to Sora. 'That was… Unreasonable.'

'It's okay.' Sora smiled forgivingly. 'Sometimes we say things in anger.'

Alice nodded shamefully before walking off. She stopped and said, 'Marked my words, Rabbit will be avenged!'

She continued on: Sora, Donald and Goofy ran after her.

'But isn't the Mad Hatter your friend?' Goofy asked, panting slightly.

Alice did not bother to stop to answer him. 'It seems madness had turned him from friend to foe.'

'But maybe if we talk to him, maybe he will become like he used to be.' Sora suggested.

This time, Alice did stopped and glared at Sora. 'You're so naïve!'

Without waiting for a reply, Alice continued forward: leaving Sora stunned. Donald put a hand on his hip. 'There's no reasoning with her.'

Sora nodded and followed Alice. Soon, they approached a hole that goes underground. They entered it but no sooner had they done that, they heard the Mad Hatter made a jumped: causing an earthquake that blocked the exit of the cave.

'Looks like our only way is forward.' Alice commented dryly.

'It's not that bad.' Sora said optimistically. 'I mean, what could happened?'

In answer, something felt on the blockade: causing a giant boulder to roll towards the group. Alice, Sora, Donald and Goofy were on their feet as they tried to make some distance between them and the giant boulder.

'You just had to open that mouth of yours!' Alice shouted.

'If I had known that would happen', Sora shouted back. 'I would have kept it shut!'

When all hope seems lost, they spotted a small crack in the cavern's walls. Putting more efforts in their running, they flung themselves into the crack just before the boulder could crush them. Out of the danger zone, the party was on fours, panting in air: only to find it thick with a mixture of rotten leaves and putrefied fruits. Sora, Donald and Goofy coughed out the foul smell from their lungs. Only Alice was immune to the stench.

'I assured you.' A voice said. 'It's not that bad. Wait till you reached a certain age.'

The group turned to the speaker. Surrounded by smaller mushrooms and dead leaf, Caterpillar laid on the biggest of all, smoking a hookah that released the foul stench. Like Rabbit and the Cheshire Cat, Wonderland has changed him: making him more gaunt and wrinkled.

'Ah Alice…' he rumbled. 'Keeper of the Light… you have returned.'

Sora leaned closer to Alice's ears. 'I thought he was smaller?'

'Age must have changed him.' Alice answered airily. 'But Rabbit never tell me why… And now his gone.'

'Why?' Caterpillar raised an eyebrow. 'To return Wonderland to its original state.'

'The Cheshire Cat said that somebody is responsible who the destruction of Wonderland.' Sora directed his words to Caterpillar. 'Who is it?'

Caterpillar blew a smoke from his Hookah. 'That question is best answered by someone else. However, you must destroy the Queen of Heart if you wish to restore Wonderland and your world again. Seek the Oracle at the end of the woods and listen to its advice. Go to the Fungiferous Forest and eat the Mushroom of Life in order to regain your human size but be wary! The voracious Centipede guard it jealously and rules what you require!'

With a wave of a hand, leafs parted to show another passage. Alice, Sora, Donald and Goofy walked down the passage where they ended up in a forest of mushrooms.

'This isn't…' before Sora could finish, Alice clasped him mouth shut.

'Don't say it!' she warned. She let go and walked on. Sora followed, not trusting himself to say anything. They walked past various types of mushrooms: small ones, big ones, and dotted, poisonous and other types. As they walked past, Sora noticed that they had sharp

teeth. Gulping to himself, he hurried on. Finally, they past through the Fungiferous Forest without any incident.

'Phew!' Donald panted. 'I thought we never make it!'

Alice dusted her dress and scowled. 'Great! Out of the frying pan into the fire.'

Once she said that, ants in uniforms and armed with bayonets surrounded them. They lifted their bayonets, ready to shoot at any movement from the group. Outnumbered and outmaneuvered, the group could do nothing but raised their hands in surrender. The captain of the guards strode forward, studied his prisoners and ordered, 'Bring them to the Centipede! He will decide their fate!'

The party was roughly pushed further into the burrows until they reached an entrance to a den. The ants pushed them into the den, making them fall until they reached the bottom. As they got on their feet, they found themselves in a huge cavern with crystals sticking out of the ground or mushrooms growing in unusual places. The cavern floor was littered with dead leaves and insects. In the middle of the cavern was a giant mushroom radiating a magnetizing aura and protected by a magical shield. In front of the majestic mushroom was a giant Centipede with sharp teeth and wearing a general's helmet, looking menacingly down on them.

'Insolent whelps!' it rumbled. 'I'll devoured you and leave nothing but your insignificant bones!'

'Try it you overgrown bug!' Alice countered. 'I will squashed you under my foot when I'm done with you!'

'If we are five feet tall that is.' Sora muttered. Alice elbowed him.

The Centipede gave a roar and shot out green ooze from its mouth. Sora automatically pointed his Key-blade and shouted, 'Proctega!'

A shield of light covered the group as the green slime splattered on it: affecting none who were inside the shield. Some of the green slime splattered on some rocks and fungus: causing them to melt. Donald looked at the dissolving life forms and shivered. Sora dispersed the shield and led the charge. The Centipede opened its mouth but instead of green slime, it released creatures that resembled it own: more smaller but still threatening.

'I got it!' Donald pointed his wand at the Centipede's minions. 'Blizzaga!'

Ice missiles fired from Donald's wand, freezing the smaller insects. The Centipede was about to scoop all of them in his mouth but Goofy flung his shield like a Frisbee: smacking the Centipede on the head. The Centipede roared in pain as it writhed its body. Seeing good opportunity, Sora and Alice approached the Centipede from both sides and brought their blades on the Centipede's steely body. To their shock, their weapons just bounced off the Centipede's armored body without leaving a scratch: Sora's Kingdom Key did damage the armor but only insignificantly. The Centipede recovered from the blow on its head and whipped his tail: knocking both Alice and Sora off their feet. The Centipede raised one of its sharp, venomous claws and brought it down on the fallen Alice. Goofy stepped in and deflected the blow. Sora jumped to his feet and sliced the claw off causing the Centipede to howl in pain as Donald helped Alice on her feet.

'Thanks!' she gasped for air as she stabilized her footing.

Sora landed safely on his feet and dodged roll as another claw sung into the earth. He rolled next to Alice. 'Damn! We didn't even land anything on him!'

'There must be a weak spot.' Alice said as she studied the screaming Centipede.

Goofy narrowed his eyes and said, 'Hey, I think there's some kind of hole underneath his belly!'

Both Sora and Alice looked to where Goofy was pointing. Sure enough, there was a cracked part of the Centipede armor that showed his unprotected flesh. Sora and Alice exchanged nods. Sora prepared to sprint.

'Donald, Goofy, cover me!'

Both his friends nodded. Donald fired fireballs at the Centipede's head while Goofy rammed his shield on its front body. The Centipede roared in frustration at the flaming fireballs and the massive impact Goofy was dealing to him. He swung his tail, his mouth and entire body to stop these nuisances to no avail. Meanwhile while the Centipede was distracted, Sora crept to the rear of the Centipede and climbed on its back. Although Sora was no light person, the Centipede did not feel the extra weight on its back. Sora climbed the steely body until he reached the top of the Centipede. Sora made a grab for its antennas and pulled them backwards. The Centipede roared in agony as it jumped high into the air and writhed its body to throw Sora off his body. Sora hanged on to the antennas and pulled the upper body of the Centipede backwards: exposing the wound in the Centipede's body. Quick as a cat, Alice rushed to the front and plunged her knife into the wound. The Centipede screamed in agony and gave a final jerk before falling onto its side, lying on the ground ominously still. Sora jumped off its back as Alice wiped green blood off her knife.

'That took quite some time.' Alice murmured as she finished wiping her blade clean.

Sora grinned. 'It's amazing what we can accomplish through teamwork!'

Alice gave Sora a thoughtful look then she nodded to herself.

'Hey look!' Donald pointed to the giant mushroom. The magic shield that was protecting the giant fungus disappeared. The group walked closer to it. Just then, the Cheshire cat appeared next to it.

'Well done!' he praised, as they got closer. 'Well done indeed!'

'Where were you?' Sora asked. 'We could really used some help with that giant insect.'

'Had to expel a nasty hairball.' He answered casually. 'Frankly, I never trusted toadstools but I suppose some have its good points.'

Alice shivered. 'I don't know which is worse: eat some toadstool or remain food for insects.'

'It's not that bad!' Goofy said. 'Just think of eating something like… omelet!'

'I will keep that in mind.' Alice grimaced as she took a bite of a piece of mushroom. Instantly, she shot up back to her normal size. As she was growing, Sora accidentally looked up and his jaws widened.

The Cheshire cat coughed. 'It is rude to see underneath a lady's dress.'

Sora blushed and hurriedly took a piece of mushroom. Soon, his growth shot up and he was taller than Alice. Donald and Goofy followed shortly. They found themselves in a barren land that everything is grey: ground and sky. Everything was dead and any hope of life was futile. There were pools filled with steaming lava covering many areas. The Cheshire cat appeared before the group.

'The dimensions of the desolate tract are unknown to al but the inhabitants. Only one path will bring you to the endgame.'

'What's this?' Sora picked up a short staff with a yellow orb attached to the top. There was a faint glow of power to it but it was dimmed.

'That's the Jabberwock's Eye Staff.' The Cheshire Cat answered. 'A powerful weapon indeed, if it is reunited with it other pieces. Alone it's only worth a carcass of a gnat.'

'To destroy the palace filled with malice is the daring work of noble Alice!' a voice boomed. The group turned to a glowing cave, no doubt the oracle that Caterpillar was talking about. 'An endgame with the Red Queen is only possible if you slay her vilest and vengeful sentinel, the Jabberwock. Without the staff that bears its name, destroying him is a hopeless work of a wasted life. The other pieces are scattered throughout the world. When you collected all of them, checkmate is possible. Seek out the pale royals, they may prove to be useful.'

The cave stopped glowing, finishing its speech. Alice turned to Sora, Donald and Goofy. 'I hope you guys know how to play chess.'

'I'm a wizard at the game!' Donald boasted. 'Relatively speaking.'

'That's good to hear.' Alice muttered. 'I'm terrible at the game.'

'Shouldn't we ask the oracle who is responsible for Wonderland's transformation?' Sora asked.

Alice pondered his question then shook her head. 'Later. We have to collect the other pieces of the staff.'

Alice, Sora, Donald and Goofy walked past the Pale Realm. Like the name suggested, everything was grey. Both the ground and sky was a giant chessboard with black and white squares. Every building in the realm was grey and dull: built in a medieval style. As they walked on, they met the denizens of the realm: moving chess-pieces.

'Gosh,' Goofy mused as he looked at the chess-pieces. 'It's feel kinda weird that we're the only four with legs.'

'Everything in Wonderland is weird.' Donald reminded.

Then they heard a loud voices and fighting further into the city. The party rushed to where they heard the commotion: white chess-pieces were in a fierce battle with red chess-pieces. Pawns were head

butting, rooks were ramming, knights were swinging their swords and bishops were firing lasers from their staffs. The Red seems to have the Whites outnumbered.

'The Queen's minions!' Alice hissed as she took out her knife and ran to the nearest Red bishop.

'We got to help them!' Sora cried as his key-blade appeared in his hands and thrust it into a nearby Red knight.

Goofy stood in front of Donald and raised his shield up: deflecting a laser from a Red bishop. Donald responded by firing lightning bolts from his wand, electrocuting the bishop. Donald blew smoke away from the tip of his wand and smiled at Goofy. 'Thanks Goofy!'

'Your welcome Donald.'

The party helped the White chess-pieces beat back the Red chess-pieces until red bodies with white bodies mingling piled up on the chessboard floor.

'That's take care of that!' Sora said, satisfied.

All this time, the battle took place in front of a majestic but greyish castle. The big castle door flung opened as two Red rooks dragged what look like a female White chest-piece by the arms. The other Whites chess-pieces who were fighting earlier gave a cry of shock and rushed towards the two rooks. However, a group made out of Red knights and pawns stopped them. The Whites fought desperately but like before, were heavily outnumbered. Alice, Sora, Donald and Goofy entered the fray and fought alongside the Whites. By the time they broke through the group, the two Red rooks had already dragged that female White chess-piece onto a moving platform that was like a chessboard but red and white instead. All the White chess-pieces wailed in anguish at the sight of the retreating platform.

Sora turned to Alice, who was grimacing terribly. 'Who was that chess-piece who look like a woman?'

Alice turned to Sora and look at him in the eyes. 'That's the White's most powerful piece: the White Queen.'

Alice, Sora, Donald and Goofy were in the White's majestic Throne Room of the White Castle. The room was massive with six staircases leading to the center and it was dimly lighted with lampposts and hanging lanterns. Despite being greyish, it still radiated a majestic aura.

Sitting on a grey throne was the White King who was distraught over the kidnapping of his queen. Standing behind him were two White rooks, frowning fiercely. The White King stood up and glided towards the party.

'Help us, please!' he implored. 'The Red Queen's forces are strong and show no mercy! Without the White Queen's generalship, Red wins! We're doomed!'

'As are we if we can't pass through this realm.' Sora said. 'We need to collect the other pieces of the Jabberwock's Eye Staff in order to defeat the Red Queen.'

'Free our queen.' the White King assured. 'That will help us both.'

'I'm no player.' Alice admitted. 'What are the rules?'

'It's simple.' Donald began. 'The pawns moved one square forward, but they can also move two steps from their original position…'

The White King interrupted Donald impatiently. 'Rules? There are no rules! There's barely any strategy! No time! Make a frontal assault on the Red Castle! I won't lie to you. You will meet deadly traps and fierce opposition along the way.'

'Should I be grateful for the truth?' Alice asked rudely. 'A lie or two might have been more persuasive.'

'In war: truth first.' The White King replied. 'There's always time for lies later. You won't face the enemy alone. Carry this soldier to the White Queen.'

The White King gave Alice something small: a white pawn.

Sora looked at the pawn in disbelief. 'So wait a minute. You expect us to infiltrate the castle, fight through our way, and rescue the White Queen with the four of us and you're only giving us a pawn? That's suicide!'

'I'm afraid so.' The White King said sheepishly. 'Now, return as you came. The rooks know the way.'

The two rooks that were standing behind the White King the whole time led the group outside the castle and once they exited, they returned back in.

'Some help they offered.' Sora growled. 'A mere pawn! We be cannon folder once we enter the enemies' territory!'

'So Donald', Alice turned to the mage. 'Any ideas?'

Donald's confidence shook. 'No… If this was a game, then yes. But this is real…'

'A-hyuk!' Goofy exclaimed suddenly. 'Hey fellas! I think I have an idea that might work!'

'Goofy!' Sora praised as they walked into the Red Realm. 'You're brilliant!'

The Red Realm was exactly the same as the Pale Realm except for one major difference: everything was red as blood. The color of grey

may have a moody and silent atmosphere but the color of red gave a chilling and ominous feeling to the party. Alice, Sora, Donald and Goofy were sneaking through the crimson streets: disguised as chess-pieces. Alice as a bishop, Sora as a knight, Donald as a pawn and Goofy as a rook.

'With these disguises on, they will never tell the difference!'

'I don't know.' Alice doubtfully tugged to her bishop's robes. 'I mean, have you ever heard of a female bishop?'

'With that kind of face, they won't know.' Donald said casually.

Alice scowled at Donald's careless remark. The group reached the courtyard and to their horror, saw the White Queen bound and struggling onto the guillotine. The blade was already raised and at the signal of the Red King's scepter, the blade descended: decapitating the White Queen. The group stood there in revulsion before heading quietly inside an empty building.

'Damn it!' Alice swore. 'We were too late!'

'Gosh!' Goofy said sadly. 'That was terrible! How could they do such a thing?'

'Now the Whites have no chance of victory!' Sora added miserably.

Only Donald did not share their pessimistic views. 'There's still hope.' The other three looked at him. 'Alice, do you still have that pawn with you?'

Alice nodded before adding bitterly, 'Like it will make any differences.'

'Maybe', Donald said mysteriously. 'Maybe not. If we can reached the end of their chessboard, there's still hope.'

Sora looked at him in surprise. 'What do you mean?'

Donald chuckled. 'You will see. Now, come on!'

Donald hurried forward. Alice, Sora and Goofy looked at each other before following Donald. Making sure that no Red chess-pieces spotted them, they finally reached the Red Castle doors. Sora and Goofy pushed the door opened and the group entered inside. Being as inconspicuous, they avoided the Red guards and made their way to the Red King's throne room: which resembled more of a red and white chessboard floating on air. As the group entered, the Red King appeared before them.

'Who dares trespassed my Royal Halls?'

'I think we can ditch the disguises.' Alice said, Sora nodded. They threw their disguises aside and readied their weapons.

'This is for the White Queen!' Sora cried. 'Charge!'

Sora, Alice and Donald charged, crying a battle cry. Goofy however, scratched behind his ears. 'Charge? But I don't have any credit cards.'

Sora thrush Kingdom Key into the Red King's torso, only to be blocked by his scepter. Alice jumped and threw her knife down on the Red King's head. The Red King jumped backwards, dodging the knife. The Red King landed on his feet and fired lasers from his scepter.

'Firaga!' Donald shouted as fireballs countered the lasers. Goofy, who just realised what was going on, flung his shield to the Red King's temple. The shield made an impact, causing the Red King to stumble. Sora delivered an upward slash, knocking the Red King's scepter out of his hand. Before the Red King could do anything, Alice retrieved her knife and stabbed it between the Red King's eyes. Alice let go and the Red King's fell on his back: dead as a stone.

'We did it!' Donald cried.

'Yeah.' Goofy agreed but looked terrified. 'Now there are more of them!'

The door opened revealing an army of Red chess-pieces. At the sight of their fallen king, they screamed in rage and charged towards the party.

'They are too many of them!' Sora cried. 'I doubt we can beat them!'

'Quickly!' Donald shouted. 'To the end of the chessboard!'

They ran to the end where they were no exits. The Red army is closing into them.

'Alice! The pawn!' Donald cried.

Alice pulled the pawn from her apron and gave it to Donald, who placed it on the chessboard. The pawn grew taller and to the surprise of Sora, Alice and Goofy, the pawn transformed into a White Queen. As the Red Army moved in, the White Queen calmly approached them and raised her hands all of the sudden. The Red chess-pieces suddenly froze before turning into dust. Sora, Alice and Goofy were watching in amazement while Donald smirked.

'If the pawn reached the other side of the chessboard, it will become any piece you want it to be.' He explained.

'And the White King said they were no rules.' Alice muttered.

As they were still watching, Alice suddenly gave a cry of pain before collapsing to the ground. Before Sora, Donald and Goofy could do anything, Sora saw a giant white-gloved hand coming down on him before sinking into oblivion.

The Truth is Revealed

Sora moaned loudly as he struggled to open his eyes. When he finally did, he found himself lying on an ornate table. He sat up and studied his surroundings. Apparently, he is in a room made from cold, lifeless walls with paintings hanging all over. Above him is a chandelier supported what look likes a green portal. What shocked him most were bald, topless children walking sideways on the wall like zombies. The others, who were also lying on ornate tables soon woke up.

'Is everybody okay?' Sora asked.

'Besides a terrible pain in my noggin,' Alice grimaced. 'I'm seem to be… fine.'

Just as they were adjusting to their new environment, the Cheshire Cat appeared, sitting on a platform that appeared sideway.

'Hey Cheshire Cat!' Goofy greeted cheerfully. 'I'm glad you here. Gosh… What are you doing sideways?'

The Cheshire Cat just grinned. 'I should be asking you the same thing.'

Without warning, the group fell onto their feet, now standing on the wall.

'Look straight ahead, or askance.' The Cheshire Cat advised. 'Whichever way you choose, you must always look in the right direction.'

He disappeared after saying that. Sora scanned the room again.

'This is really mess up!'

Alice just strolled past him. 'Let just find a way out of here. This place reminded of somewhere where I dread.'

They walked on, passing more insane children and a corridor with giant mirrors; making the building more bizarre than it already was. They walked through rooms with pipes, gears, cogs and moving platforms as well as banshees and killer robots. Finally, they approached a nicely decorated wooden door among all the monstrosities that offered them. Hearing voices inside, they pushed open the door: revealing a large, fat giant and a short, plump person. Both of them wore identical green hats with a mini-helicopter on it, red and white stripes shirts with white pants and an ugly scowl on each of their faces. They happened to be Alice's two former friends: Tweedle-Dee and Tweedle-Dum.

'Look Dum', Tweedle-Dum said as the group entered. 'It's whatshername and her three stooges, from the Neurotic Ward. Nurse's favourite lunatic.'

'What are they talking about?' Sora asked Alice.

'None of your bloody business.' She hissed.

'Oh yeah?' Tweedle-Dum inquired. 'Scrawny, ain't she? Who let her out, then? They blame us for sure.'

'She will needs medicine.' Tweedle-Dee observed. 'Strong medicine.'

'She got anything to eat?' Tweedle-Dum asked again.

'I doubt it.' Tweedle-Dee replied. 'She never finishes her grub at the asylum. If she had any meat on her, she made a delectable dish.'

With her hands on her hips, Alice scowled, 'Despicable, grotesque, and smelly louts. I'll fill your bellies, alright!'

'They look big.' Goofy stated the obvious. 'They will be difficult to beat.'

'I know that!' Alice snapped. 'We just use their size against them!'

'Sounds like a plan!' Sora said as he pulled out his key-blade. Tweedle-Dee and Tweedle-Dum pulled out wooden swords as they charged towards the group, shaking the floor at each step. Donald and Alice attacked Tweedle-Dee while Sora and Goofy handle Tweedle-Dum. Tweedle-Dee threw bombs at the charging Alice and Donald. Donald pointed his staff at the flying bombs and fired electric bolts: causing the bombs to explode and create a smokescreen. Alice, using the smoke to her advantage, hid in it and attacked Tweedle-Dee from a blind side. Unfortunately, Tweedle-Dee blocked her knife with his sword and the two of the exchanged blows. Tweedle-Dum thrust his sword forward, only to be blocked by Goofy's shield. Sora brought Kingdom Key onto Tweedle-Dum's head, only for him to dodge. Tweedle-Dum slammed against Goofy's shield, causing him to fall backwards. Sora swung his key-blade sideway while Tweedle-Dum ducked and aimed a thrust into Sora's mid-section. Sora stepped sideways and Goofy rammed into Tweedle-Dum, making him bumped into Tweedle-Dee. Distracted, Donald used his chance to encase Tweedle-Dee's head with an ice spell. Unable to see his enemies' movements, Alice stabbed his oversized belly with her knife; releasing a foul odour. With a crinkled nose, she pushed Tweedle-Dee, causing him to fall backwards onto Tweedle-Dum. At his fall, there was a massive rumble followed by an ominous silence as it was cleared the two brothers were dead. Alice and Sora smiled at each other.

'I'm really starting to get a hang on this teamwork thing.' She said.

At a sound of a sigh, the group turned around and saw the Mad Hatter standing behind them with a walking stick in his gloved hand.

'Bad-timing. Pity.' He sighed. 'Reliable help is so hard to find these days. Come in my dears, you're just in time for tea.'

'Tea?' Donald cried. 'Oh boy!'

He was stopped by Sora however. 'I don't think he is being sincere.'

'I only take mine with friends.' Alice told him.

'Count me among them.' The Mad Hatter assured her. 'Accurately. I mean, honestly. That's the truth. Oh, I almost forgot! You and the truth never get along.'

'And you would know?' Alice challenged him.

'Truth is always bitter to those who fear it.'

'I fear nothing.'

'False!' the Mad Hatter cried. 'You fear much… The return trip to the asylum, for example… the memories that drove you there… more years in, shall we say, supervised hospitalization… Ah yes, you fear much. Of course, all that might be avoided.'

'How?' Alice demanded. 'Tell me, what do you mean?'

Before the Mad Hatter could answer, the floor below the group crumbled from the entire ruckus caused by the Tweedle brothers. The cracks became larger as Sora wrapped his arms protectively around Alice before they fell down. In mid-air, Donald pointed his staff at the hard platform below them.

'Gravity!'

Their descents began to slow down and landed softly onto the platform. All this time, Alice's head was buried into Sora's chest. Now that they are out of danger, Alice pushed Sora roughly away from her.

'Like I told you before,' she reminded him coldly. 'I'm not a helpless little girl anymore.'

She stomped towards corridor as the others got back on their feet. Goofy scratched behind his ears.

'Gosh, she could at least say thank you.'

Sora nodded but just said, 'She can be so unpredictable sometimes.'

They ran after Alice as they continued through more corridors and passageways, this time with clockwork clocks and more gears; displaying the domain of the Mad Hatter. They approached another massive door and opened it. Inside were mechanism and inventions of the Mad Hatter: complicating and pitiless to look at. Strapped onto of these contraptions were a brown hare and a dormouse: some parts of their body turned into machines. Sora, Donald and Goofy hurried to their sides, horrified at what happened to their friends.

'Hare, Dormouse!' Goofy cried. 'Are you alright?'

'Who did this to you?' Donald asked.

Hare opened his eyes slowly. Recognising the group, he murmured, 'Sora, Donald, Goofy and even Alice, I'm so glad to see you here.' He raised his head higher. 'Hey Dormy! Wake up! Someone here to release us!'

Dormouse tiredly opened his eyes. 'Just humans… probably useless… So tired…'

'Please release us from these contraptions!' Hare begged.

'Or you can just give us tea, if you prefer.' Dormouse murmured sleepily.

Alice, however, just folded her arms. 'Were you impolite at the table? Did you slurp your tea? Or talk while chewing? Confess your crimes.'

Although used to her behaviour, Sora was shocked at her indifference but he did not say anything.

'We've done nothing of that sort!' Hare cried. 'It's the Hatter! He's gone quite mad, if I do say so myself!'

'How much madder can he get?' Sora asked.

'As mad as a typhoon!' Hare claimed. 'Just like the Queen of Hearts!'

Alice stared at a machine. 'Both are powerful, destructive and extremely cruel, but a typhoon doesn't necessarily need to be.'

Hare nodded his head. 'Good answer. Wrong but good.'

Alice turned to face the captives again. 'Oh I'm sorry', she said sarcastically. 'You're in real danger. Where is your host?'

'Danger?' Dormouse asked, puzzled. 'I don't think so! Hare, I'm so tired! I want to go home…'

'He will be here at 6 o'clock sharp.' Hare answered her second question.

'Most cruel.' Dormouse yawned. 'He always deny us our tea and his medicines make me sleepy…'

Alice shook her head as she walked out. Sora stopped her.

'Aren't we going to set them free?'

Alice shrugged. 'I don't think they know their predicament. In any case, I doubt they will be any danger.'

Alice exited the laboratory. Sora, Donald and Goofy looked back at Hare and Dormouse and seeing they were fine, they hurried after Alice. They found her in another room, this time with a giant cage housing a beautiful creature that have not been tainted by the Mad Hatter's madness. The creature was covered with brown and white feathers with golden claws. It had the body of a lion but the head and wings of an eagle. Alice approached Gryphon, a close friend of hers.

'Those two doesn't seem to comprehend the situation here.' Alice referred to Hare and Dormouse.

'Those two are blithering idiots.' Gryphon dismissed. 'However, the Hatter does come at six on the dot.'

'For his tea? A-hyuk.' Goofy asked.

Gryphon shook his head. 'No. To check on his cruel experiments. With gears, springs, levers and mechanical gizzards, he seeks an impossible precision like a watchmaker obsessed with infinitesimal fractions of seconds or a mathematician who tries to square a circle. He will turn all the inhabitants into automatons, or kill them in the attempt.'

'You can square circles?' Goofy asked, confused.

Nobody tried to tell him it was an expression. Sora inspects the cage. 'Is there anything we can do to help?'

'Forget about me.' Gryphon said. 'You must defeat the Mad Hatter before he could turn more innocent creatures into… monstrosities.'

Donald, who was investigating, gave a cry. 'Hey guys, I think I found something!'

The others gathered around Donald and saw what look like a part of an ancient staff. It was radiating a powerful aura. Picking it up, Alice nodded.

'This is part of the Jabberwock's Eye Staff all right!'

'That's great!' Sora said. 'Just one more and we can defeat the Queen of Heart and end this nightmare!'

Alice nodded absent-minded as a door opened. Knowing who is waiting in the next room, the group warily entered through the door. To their bewilderment, they were on a giant platform in the open sky. In each corner of the platform was a clockwork clock, their hands pointing at six. Standing in the middle of the platform was the Mad Hatter, wearing a nasty smile on his face.

Sora grimaced as he summoned Kingdom Key. 'This is maybe a bad thing, but I'm starting to get use with killing people who I used to be

friends with.'

'Don't think I'm enjoying this too, you know.' Alice whispered back as she prepared her Vorpal Blade. 'But you know what they said, a friend today can be an enemy tomorrow.'

Before Sora could say anymore, the Mad Hatter's top hat opened and a small bomb flew out of it. Sora and Alice dodged sideways as the bomb exploded. Alice landed on her side and the Mad Hatter seized the opportunity to bring his cane down of the defenceless Alice, Goofy raised his shield and blocked the heavy attack. Donald cast Thundaga, only to have the Mad Hatter sprung backwards with his mechanized legs. Sora shot Firaga from Kingdom Key and the Mad Hatter responded by ducking. Alice, who quickly got to her feet, dashed towards the Mad Hatter in an attempt to stab his face. The Mad Hatter deflected her blow with his cane and spins it, making it impossible for any attack to reach him. Goofy threw his shield like a Frisbee. It flew past the Mad Hatter, made a turn and hit the Mad Hatter on the back of his head: causing him to stumble backwards. Alice threw the Vorpal Blade into the Mad Hatter's head, creating a small crack on his forehead. Sora aimed Kingdom Key with precise accuracy and shot a blast of light into the crack. The Mad Hatter screamed as steam rushed out from his ears and soon, his head exploded causing his mechanical torso to fall down. Alice picked up her knife and wiped it clean with her apron. Behind them, the door burst opened and Gryphon flew towards them, his wings spread majestically before landing in front of them.

'With gratitude', he bowed. 'I offer you my services.'

'Promise only what you're prepared to deliver.' Alice warned. 'I'm destined to battle the Red Queen. The outcome is uncertain.'

'You won't fight alone.' Gryphon said. 'Permit me to serve as your commander. I'll muster the forces whose allegiance your courage and skill have already won.'

'And you still got us!' Sora joined in. 'So what's the plan?'

'An assault on the Queen's depends on breaching the gates to her kingdom which only the Jabberwock's Eye Staff can opened.'

'So all we need to do is to sneaked from behind and open the gates from the inside!' Donald finished Gryphon's strategy. Gryphon nodded.

'Very well.' Alice said. 'While you gather our allies, I will recover the last part of the Jabberwock's Eye Staff.'

Sora grinned. 'Sounds like a plan.'

Gryphon lowered his back so everybody could climb on. Then he lifted his wings and flew high into the sky, away from the Mad Hatter's domain.

Sora, Donald, Goofy and Alice has been flying for some time until they came back to the lava-riddled area where they found both the oracle and the first half of the Jabberwock's Eye staff. Gryphon landed gently and let the group off.

'Recruit whatever allies you can, Alice.' Gryphon advised. 'We'll need them all. I will return with reinforcement. Take heart.'

He lifted his wings once again and took to the sky. The group watched Gryphon go before turning towards the oracle.

'The time of action has arrived.' It boomed. 'You should not waste a day. No lame excuses do you contrive, nor tolerate delay.'

'Hey!' Sora said angrily. 'We're doing the best we could!'

'Yeah!' Donald agreed with Sora.

The Cheshire Cat appeared besides Alice. Alice noticed his appearance and complained, 'It talks like I'm on holiday. Wandering about, having a bit of fun. The oracle's an idiot.'

Confront what frightens or offends you.' The Cheshire Cat purred. 'Reckless or insulting should never go unchallenged,'

To the surprise of all, something huge slowly oozed out of the cave, covered in a fez and smoking a hookah.

'You?' Alice gasped as Caterpillar showed himself. 'Bizarre creature! I was beginning to like you!'

'Like me or not.' Caterpillar said unperturbed. 'But believe me. The Jabberwock must be eliminated. Now. Blow open the gates and confront the queen.'

'I don't have the final piece of the staff.' Alice objected. 'Without his eye, how can it be done?'

Caterpillar puffed out a smoke. 'I do not know but it must be done. It is urgent!'

Sora finally lost his patience. 'Enough!' Everybody looked at him. 'Look, stop pressuring Alice! We're doing the best we can here!'

Alice, shocked to hear Sora explode, placed her hand on his shoulders, trying to calm him. Caterpillar bowed his head. 'My apologies.'

However, Sora was not done yet. 'Enough of this wild goose chase! It wasn't the Red Queen who was responsible of all this! She only seized the opportunity to wreck Wonderland. I say we find the one responsible for Wonderland's destruction and dealt with her. Then Wonderland will be back to normal!'

There was an uncomfortable silence that followed Sora's outburst. Caterpillar continued smoking his hookah, the Cheshire cat licked his paws, Donald and Goofy looked in shock at the boy who was always easy-going suddenly losing his cool and Alice looked silently at her feet, saying nothing.

Caterpillar released a smoke before saying calmly, 'You speak of the one responsible of Wonderland's ruin? I believe you already met her.'

Sora stepped backwards in surprise. 'Her? What are you talking about? When did I meet her? The Duchess? The Red Queen?'

'None of them.' The Cheshire cat answered as he walked in Sora's sight. 'You regard the one who destroyed Wonderland an enemy? You know the saying; "keep your friends close and your enemy closer".'

'Enough of your cryptic words!' Sora demanded. 'Just tell me who is she!'

'Very well.' Caterpillar sighed. 'The person responsible for Wonderland's destruction is standing right behind you.'

Sora looked like he was turned into stone as Caterpillars' words sank into him. Unwilling to accept his words, Sora turned around and saw Alice's expression, sad but with a hint of guilt in her eyes.

'Alice.' Sora pleaded. 'Say it isn't true…'

Alice just turned her back on him and ran away into the rocky terrain. Sora wanted to call her back, to reaffirm Caterpillar's statement but he knew it was the truth due to Alice's reaction. Sora could only watched her back as it disappeared behind some rocks. However, he was not ready to pass judgement on her. He whirled back to Caterpillar and the Cheshire cat.

'That's impossible!' Sora defended Alice. 'No matter how much Alice changed, she would never do anything to harm Wonderland! She made so many friends here! She… She love Wonderland!'

'You're correct in what you're saying young Key-Blade Master.' The Cheshire cat purred. 'Alice did not harmed Wonderland… directly.'

'What do you mean?' Goofy asked.

Caterpillar coughed slightly to clear his throat. 'Before we answer your question, what do you think Wonderland is?'

Sora looked at Caterpillar, as if he gone mad. 'Why… It's a world.'

Caterpillar nodded slowly. 'You're only half-correct. Wonderland only existed through a person's imagination.'

'Someone who always curious…' the Cheshire cat purred. 'Someone eager to learn and have great imagination… Also lacking in friends.'

Donald made two and two together and finally understood. 'You mean Alice made Wonderland?'

At both Caterpillar's and the Cheshire cat's nods, Sora freaked out. 'We're in a girl's mind? Eeeeeewwwwww!'

'It seems to me like I'm explaining to a statue.' The Cheshire cat said. 'We're inside an imaginative world made by a girl, not in her mind.'

That calmed Sora. 'Oh… Right! So, what happened? What did Alice do to turn Wonderland into this?'

'To seek the answer', the Cheshire cat replied. 'You must scour the source but be tact or else you will face a banshee's wrath.'

'What we can say is this.' Caterpillar suggested helpfully. 'She is living in guilt, ashamed of her past misdeeds and leaving those she loved behind. It's up to you to bring her back or the guilt will consume her.'

Sora, although still in the dark, nodded. 'Gotcha.'

He hurried after Alice into the rocky terrain. After a while, he found her hugging her legs; sobbing into her arms uncontrollably. Heeding the Cheshire cat's advice, Sora quietly approached her, sat besides

her and gently place his hand on hers. Alice looked up, tears flowing down from her eyes.

'Sora…' she whispered.

'It's all right.' Sora assured her. 'Take your time. I may not understand what happened in your past but believe me, I allow me to help for I know what is like to lose somebody you love.'

Alice laughed, brokenly. 'Aren't you going to kill me? After all, I'm the one who turned my Wonderland into this… Monstrosity!'

'What I said earlier was a bit too hasty, or naturally. Everybody make mistakes, even I do. Besides, you may have turn Wonderland into a monstrosity but it's the Red Queen whose making it worse. You're doing what you can to help.'

Alice wiped away her tears and smiled at Sora. 'Sora, thank you.' They smiled at each other in silence until Alice broke it. She closed her eyes and asked, 'You must be wondering what happened to make me change so much?'

Sora nodded and Alice sighed. 'Very well; ten years ago, my entire family was burned in a fire. I was the only one who survived.'

'That's… That's horrible! How did it happened?'

Alice took a deep breath before continuing. 'I was sleeping in my room, dreaming of having tea with the Mad Hatter, Hare and Dormouse when all of a sudden, I smelled smoke in the air. I don't know how the fire started but I woke up to see myself surrounded in an inferno. I rushed to my parents' room in hope of saving them but it was futile, the fire took them away from me and would have gotten me too if it weren't for my cat, Dinah. She showed me the way out and I got out of the fire. Seeing my father and mother burned into ashes made me lose my mind. For ten years, I was instituted into Rutledge Asylum where Dr Heironymous Wilson ministers me. Trust me, his treatment can be… inhumane sometimes.'

'So back in the Mad Hatter's place?' Sora probed.

'Yes.' Alice confirmed his thoughts. 'The asylum, the Tweedle brothers and the Mad Hatter; everything that reminded me of that cursed place.' Alice looked down on her wrists and Sora, to his horror, saw faint red scars that looked like cuts from a knife. 'There are times when I wanted to take my own life, to be together with my parents but the nurses kept on stopping me. In the end, I just laid in the asylum's bed; half-dead, half-alive.' Alice trembled and buried her face into Sora's chest. 'For ten years, I lived with this guilt of surviving that fire! I-I saw their faces, burning in the fiery corners of Hell! I can still hear their v-voices, telling me to save myself and leave them to die! I don't want to live anymore! I should have died in that fire with them! I wish I was dead!'

Alice continued crying as Sora hugged her, offering her some solace. Judging his moments, Sora whispered, 'You're wrong Alice.'

Alice lifted her face, looking deep into Sora's eyes. 'What do you mean?'

'Alice. If you had died in that fire or killed yourself, your parents' sacrifice will be for nothing. Your parents love you. The last thing they want is to see you come to harm. If you die now, then you neglected your parents' wish for you to live.'

Alice got back to her fierce self. 'What the hell do you…?'

'I know because my father sacrificed himself to save me!' Sora snapped.

Alice could only opened her mouth but no words came out. She lowered her gaze and mumbled, 'I'm sorry.'

'Don't be.' Alice looked up, surprise at Sora's tone. 'Believe me, I'm… Torn that my father is gone but his actions inspired me to be the hero that save everyone so they won't suffer the same fate again!' Then Sora sobered. 'I can still remember until this day. We were out

fishing one day, a calm beautiful day like any other day. We were competing who caught the most fish and laughing together. That was the best day I had with my dad.'

'Then all of the sudden, a storm came in and the waves were rising higher and higher. My dad and I rowed as hard as we could back to the island but a wave capsized our boat. We fell into the water and I sunk deeper than him. I was about to drown when my dad rescued me. He lifted me back to the surface and brought me back. As we float on the surface, we were heading towards the rocks and the waves only made it worse. I was about to rammed head first into the rocks when my dad turned me away from the rocks at the last minute, making sure the rocks hit his back instead of me. After half an hour, dad and me finally reached the shores. I pulled my dad further away from the sea but it was too late. His s-spine was broken and the doctor said there was nothing to be done. My mom, who came with the doctor and the other villagers, was there: sobbing away. Despite his pain, my dad rolled onto his side and he only asked, "Are you all right, son?"'

'At that time, I could only nodded while I hold back my tears. He smiled and said, "I'm glad that at my last moment, we spent time together as father and son. Looks like I won't last long with this kind of injury but I'm glad you're unhurt. Sora, grow up to be a good and strong man and look after your mother. Remember, I may not be with you physically but I will always in your heart. I love you, son."'

Sora closed his eyes as he reminisced, a tear flowing down his cheek. 'After saying that, he died with a smile on his face. My dad sacrifice himself so to let me live my life as a kid. His sacrifice inspired me to do the same to those in need and made me into the hero that I am today.'

He opened his eyes and looked into Alice. 'Alice, I know it's difficult to watch somebody you love died in front of you but you must learn how to move on. I'm sure it's what your parents wanted. Also, if you die, the entire of Wonderland will die with you: the Cheshire cat, Caterpillar, Gryphon and everyone else.'

Sora held Alice's hands into his. 'Alice, allow me to help. With me, Gryphon, Donald, Goofy and the others behind your back, we can make Wonderland the way it use to be. So please, be strong and turn away from your past.'

Alice closed her eyes and then smiled. 'Sora, thank you.' She slowly stood up, her back on Sora. She took a few breath before speaking in the tone that Sora was accustomed to by now, 'Sora, let's finish this, let's save Wonderland, together!'

Sora smiled and stood besides Alice, 'Yeah, together!'

Both of them clasped hands firmly, determination and hope in their eyes as they re-join the others.

The Battle for Sanity

'This is it', Alice said firmly. 'The Jabberwock's Lair.'

After re-joining with the others, Alice, Sora, Donald and Goofy travelled to a desolate and forbidden place with lava fountains and skeletons scattered all over the place. Inside, they could hear the growling of the Jabberwock, the Red Queen's champion.

'Must we go in there?' Donald asked, his legs shaking.

'We came so far.' Goofy said. 'There is no turning back.'

Sora looked at Alice. He grabbed her hand and gave it a slight squeeze. Alice squeezed back and smiled at him before letting go. The group readied their weapons and strode slowly into the lair. As they enter the lair, they stopped as they behold a creature that was most horrifying so far during their encounter. The creature resembled a giant, green lizard with mechanical wings, glowing yellow orbs for eyes and a burning furnace attached to its' chest. This half-monster and half-machine was enough to scare anything in its way. When it spoke, it was in a low, dangerous voice.

'You've kept me waiting, Alice. Have you never heard that punctuality's a virtue?' It tilted its head. 'I see you brought your lackeys with you.'

'Who are you calling lackeys?' Donald cried angrily.

'This guy reminds me of my dentist.' Sora muttered to Alice.

'Doesn't he?' Alice whispered back.

The Jabberwock prowled around before continuing, 'You're habitually late, aren't you? Between your dim-witted daydreaming and your preening vanity, the hours just fly by; there's barely time for anything else.'

Alice just folded her arms. 'Is that the best you can do? Hurl second-rated insults? They don't hurt…'

'Your parents were expecting you to come to them, were they?' The Jabberwock interrupted causing Alice to flinch. 'Perhaps they thought you warn them of the danger… being close to the source, as you were. But they waited in vain, didn't they, and died for their trouble.'

Alice voice shook, 'We were all asleep. It was an accident… I…'

The Jabberwock interrupted again, this time with an edge in its voice. 'You selfish, misbegotten, and unnatural child! You smelled the smoke but you were in dreamland taking tea with your friends. You couldn't be bothered. Your room was protected and spare while your family upstairs roasted in an inferno of incredible horror.'

'NNNNOOOOOO!' Alice screamed. She was about to fall to her knees when Sora caught her.

'Don't give in into your guilt Alice!' he urgently said to her. 'He is trying to make you vulnerable.'

'Come on Goofy!' Donald pointed his staff at the Jaberwock. 'Let's get him!'

'Yeah!' Goofy stepped in front of Donald to block the Jabberwock's fiery breath. Once the flames resided, Donald returned fire with Blizzaga, attempting to freeze the Jabberwock. The Jabberwock merely spat out more fire to counter Donald's ice spell. Goofy went on the offensive and smacked the Jabberwock on its head with his shield. Goofy might as well tried to hit a rock because the Jabberwock did not flinch. It gave a definite roar and tossed them away with its' tail. Then the Jabberwock glared at Sora and Alice and aimed a beam of laser into their direction.

'Proctecga!' Sora shouted as he threw a shield of power over him and Alice. The laser made a contact with the shield and there was a loud explosion that rocked the lair. Donald and Goofy stared in horror

as the explosion consumed their friends. When the dust settled, the Jabberwock growled in confusion when he could not find Sora or Alice's bodies. Before he knew it, Sora and Alice, who recovered, were besides him. Sora brought his Key-blade on its back while Alice plunged the Vorpal Blade into its belly. The Jabberwock screamed in pain as spun around. Alice and Sora ducked and dodged its wild movement and continue their assault. Finally, the Jabberwock flung Sora off his feet with its metallic wings and struck Alice with its fist. Alice fell on her back and was helpless as the Jabberwock towered over her. Before the Jabberwock could finish her off, Gryphon appeared out of nowhere and tackled it to the crowd. On top of it, Gryphon used his sharp claw and scratched one of the Jabberwock's eyes. The Jabberwock gave another screamed and pushed Gryphon off it. It stretched its wings and flew out of the hole, escaping for its life. Goofy helped Donald up as Sora pulled Alice to her feet. Sora made sure she was all right before letting her go, only for Alice to continue holding onto Sora's hands. They stared into each other eyes before letting go.

'Hurry Alice', Gryphon said, oblivious to the byplay between Sora and Alice. 'The eye staff is yours. The troops are gathered; everything is ready. I'll deal with the Jabberwock. You are our champion. Lead us to victory in Queensland!'

Sora grimaced at the touch of the Jabberwock's eyeball and handed it to Alice. Alice took it and connected it to the staff. At once, she felt the power radiating from it. Donald and Goofy were already on Gryphon's back when Alice and Sora joined them. Sora helped Alice onto Gryphon's back and sat behind her. Gryphon spread his wings and flew out from the same hole the Jabberwock escaped from.

Gryphon flew through the night and soon reached the Red Queen's domain. They landed in front of a giant glimmering wall and attached to it was a beating vein. Gryphon looked at the group.

'Only the staff can pry that wall open. I will keep the Jabberwock distracted. Be safe, Alice.'

Alice held Gryphon's head by the side. 'And you take care. I will see you on the other side.'

Gryphon bowed his head low and took off. Once Gryphon was gone, the group turned to the vast glimmering wall. They searched for a door but found none.

Goofy scratched his head. 'How are we suppose to get in?'

'Do you know how to work that thing?' Sora asked as Alice hold out the Jabberwock's Eye Staff.

Alice frowned. 'Not really… Maybe if I just point it towards the wall, concentrate it powers and then release… AH!'

The scream was cause when the staff glowed blue in colour and release a form of energy towards the wall. There was an explosion, leaving a wide enough hole in the wall.

'Or that might work.' Sora grinned at Alice, who grinned back.

The group walked through the hole and found themselves in the royal maze. The ground was lust with healthy grass, the walls of greens were nicely trimmed and there were statues and fountains in every corner. For a place ruled by a tyrant, there was some beauty in the domain. The group hurried on, avoiding the guards or, if came to the inevitable, silently slew them less they sound the alarm. After what seems hours, the group approached a small island surrounded by lava. On the island were Gryphon and the Jabberwock facing each other. They took to the air at the same time, engaging in aerial combat with Gryphon's sharp claws versus the Jabberwock's fiery breath. By a stroke of misfortune, the Jabberwock's flames singed one of Gryphon's wings making him unstable in the air. The Jabberwock seized this opportunity and lashed his tail down on Gryphon. To the horror of the group, Gryphon fell with increasing speed towards the ground; his body crashing into the rocks that was planted in the middle of the island. Gryphon sprawled on the rocks as the group hurried to his side. He was barely breathing. The

Jabberwock flew and burned down the bridge that led to the other side. He landed and sneered:

'How typical! How foolish you were to think you can overcome your guilt!'

Angered at Gryphon's death, Alice pointed the staff at the Jabberwock and fired a blast of energy. The Jabberwock merely flew upward and allowed the beam to pass through him. The flying beast fired a dozen of fireballs at the group. Donald countered with Blizzardga while Goofy deflected the remaining fireballs. Sora fired a beam of light and hit the Jabberwock squarely in the chest. The creature screamed but was still airborne. It landed and glared at them, releasing a powerful laser beam. More calmer and focussed, Alice fired her own beam of laser with the staff and the beam collided with the Jabberwock's own beam. The two beams pushed each other in different direction until the beam from the staff prove more superior to the Jabberwock's. The beam knocked the Jabberwock off its feet and it landed on its back. It screamed in agony as it squirmed around until he exploded; showering the ground with mechanical bits, blood, molten liquid and organs. Alice, Sora, Donald and Goofy lowered their weapons and relaxed. Then they heard Gryphon's gasps and kneeled to him. Gryphon turned to them.

'Well done all of you.' He weakly acknowledged them. 'You have defeated the Queen's guardian and avenge my death. Enter the ultimate battle.'

Alice gazed sadly at the brave creature. 'Must I fight on? Can't the Red Queen be persuaded to surrender?'

Gryphon shook his head. 'True words and logic rarely defeat evil intent. She is still strong and so many had been harmed. They want revenge, which we call justice. She made this world, and she must pay. You… you must lead our forces against her.'

'I'm not sure I know how to lead.' Alice said doubtfully.

'Do your best, Alice. You can only do your best. Besides,' Gryphon smiled weakly. 'You have friends to help you in your time of need.' He indicated to Sora, Donald and Goofy.

Gryphon sighed and his eyes closed. His breathing stopped. Alice covered her face with her hands and sobbed besides the dead Gryphon. After allowing her to grief for her friend, Sora gently placed his hand on her shoulder.

'Come on Alice.' He whispered gently. 'Let's give him a proper burial. We have a lot of things ahead of us.'

Alice slowly nodded and held his hand, seeking for some comfort. Donald and Goofy allowed the both of them some time and started digging a hole. Sora pulled Alice to her feet and joined the other two in digging the hole. Once the hole was deep enough, the four of them gently carried Gryphon's body and placed him in the hole. Soon the hole was buried and they all lowered their heads in silence.

Alice lifted her head in determination. 'Let's finish this!'

Sora nodded. 'Together.'

Alice nodded and smiled. 'Together!'

The party ran towards the door and pushed it open. They saw the White Chess pieces fighting against the Red Queen's card guards, pushing them back against the palace gates. Alice, Sora, Donald and Goofy joined in the fray. Alice blasting any card soldiers with the staff, Sora slashing and hacking them into shreds, Donald firing magic and Goofy slamming his shield on any cards unfortunate in the way. They met the White King in the chaos as he decapitated a few Red cards with his sword. He noticed Alice and grinned.

'I knew I find you here! When Gryphon told us about you leading us against the Red Queen, I rallied my troops in haste and joined the battle as soon as possible. It's the least we can do for saving our queen!'

'We appreciate your help.' Sora told him.

Alice nodded gratefully. 'We need to get to the Red Queen and destroy her completely!'

'Then leave the rest to us!' the White King said. 'You go on and end her tyranny once and for all!'

Alice and Sora thanked him and they dashed towards the palace doors with Donald and Goofy bringing up the rear. They barged through the door and raced through the crimson walls and ramparts. Any card guards they encountered were cut down immediately. Soon, they reach a giant bronze door with three hearts on the side and top. As they were near to the door, the Cheshire Cat appeared before them.

'Bravery and I are not on intimate terms', he began as he walked towards them and sat down. 'My natural curiosity is tempered with caution, thus I lived long.' He vanished and reappeared on their left. 'But now, ignoring my instinct to flee or fib, I speak the truth without regard of consequences. Your courage deserves no less.' He reappeared on their right this time. 'You have suffered great pain and you have caused some. You've endured deep grief and feeling of guilt.' The door behind him slowly opened. 'But you will be tested by a more wrenching anguish, Alice. There is worst to come. You and the Red Queen cannot both survive. You are two parts of the same…'

He was about to finish the sentence when suddenly; a beam of red energy slammed into him and decapitated him on the spot. The Cheshire cat's head rolled to the stunned group. Alice fell to her knees and covered her face again.

'Noooooooo…' she groaned.

Sora also knelt besides Alice. 'How could this had happened?'

Donald threw one of his tantrums. 'That's it! She is going DOWN!'

Donald rushed into the room, yelling a battle cry.

'Donald!' Sora cried as he stood up. 'Wait!'

Alice cursed and followed both Donald and Sora into the room. Goofy frowned at the lifeless head of the Cheshire cat and asked aloud, 'What did you mean about that last part?'

Receiving no answer, Goofy shrugged and hurried after his friends.

The group entered a massive room with four red pillars supporting a ceiling and a red carpet leading to a throne. They stopped as they noticed the throne was occupied. The figure was a woman with a pale, crimson face, red horns curved downwards, three red claws as hands and her bottom is made out of tentacles. Her clothing consisted of a red and purple stripes top, a white skirt and a purple cape.

Alice strode forward with Sora, Donald and Goofy behind her and asked, 'Who am I?'

The Red Queen lifted herself from the throne and said, 'Off with her head.' Then her face fell, revealing her to be faceless. A giant tentacle lifted it off the throne, making it looked like a puppet and a giant crack split between them and her. The Red Queen fired magical projectiles at them. The group dodged behind the pillars before the projectiles could hit them. Hiding behind the pillar, Donald peeked out and fired his own magic at the Red Queen. His fire and lightning spells collided with the queen's own projectiles, causing small explosions. The Red Queen could not see where her enemies are at and when the dust settled, she realized too late that Goofy, Alice and Sora were running towards the edge of the crack. Goofy fell to his knee and raised his shield over his head, like a platform. Sora and Alice jumped on the shield and Goofy gave them a boost; allowing Sora and Alice to fly over the gap. The Red Queen closed in her claws to defend herself but she was too late. Both Sora and Alice had their blades in their hand and they struck; Sora plunging Kingdom Key into the Queen's chest and Alice sinking the Vorpal

Blade into her head. The Red Queen screamed in agony and both Sora and Alice pulled out their weapons and jumped off the Queen before she collapsed onto the floor. She laid there still, body and tentacle. Donald and Goofy soon joined them as they checked to make sure the Red Queen was dead. Then a sparkling aura sprung out of the Red Queen and surrounded the group but not harming anyone of them. Without warning, the tentacle lifted up the dead body and retreated back into a hole. Something exploded and the group dodged the flying rocks that flew towards them. To their surprise, a head with red skin and yellow glowing eyes was in front of them.

'What the hell is that?' Sora asked.

In response, it opened its mouth and the Mad Hatter's Face appeared then the Mad Hatter opened his mouth and Alice's face appeared. It spoke in a woman's voice.

'I rule Wonderland alone. Your interference will not be tolerated. This realm is for grown-ups; raw, well-ordered, ruthless careening on the jagged edge of reality.' Then its voiced changed, becoming huskier and grated. 'Self-pitying dreamers are not wanted here. They cannot survive here! You fear the truth. You live in the shadows. Your pathetic attempts to reclaim your sanity have failed. Retreat to the sterile safety of your self-delusions or risk inevitable annihilation.' Then it continued smugly. 'If you destroy me, you destroy yourself! Leave now and some hollow part of you may survive. Stay, and I will break you down; you will lose yourself forever!'

After saying that, the head retreated back into the darkness. Alice stood up and clenched her fists. 'There's no way I'm turning back because some freak of nature threatens me! I'm regaining my sanity or die trying!'

'And we will be behind you all the way!' Sora said, standing besides her.

'So are we!' Donald joined in.

'Yeah!' Goofy agreed.

Alice smiled at her friends. 'Thank you, I wouldn't have made it without you guys.'

'Oooohhhh!' Goofy suddenly pushed everyone into a hug. 'Group hug everyone!'

Sora and Alice's cheeks touched each other and both of them sworn that they were heating up. After a while, Goofy let them go. Donald was gasping for air as the hug was too tight for him. Sora and Alice looked away from each other, in embarrassment.

'Geeze, Goofy!' Donald gasped. 'You could have given us more warning!'

'A-hyuck!' Goofy scratched his ears. 'Sorry. So are we ready?'

Alice was the first one to recover her composure. 'Y-yeah! Sure!' She stood in front of the hole, Vorpal Blade in hand. 'Let's go!'

She fearlessly jumped into the hole, followed by Donald and Goofy. Sora touched the cheek where it met with Alice's and mused. Then he shook his head.

'I have Kairi!' he muttered to himself. 'Kairi is my girlfriend! I'm not going to two-timed her for Alice!'

Sora steeled himself and jumped into the hole along with the others.

When Sora joined the others, they found themselves on a floating platform surrounded in darkness. The platform they were standing on was part of a ring made out of other floating platforms.

Goofy looked around and scratched his head. 'So, where is the Red Queen again?'

Then coming from the darkness came two glowing, big yellow eyes and at a closer inspection, a gaping mouth came into view followed

by several flailing tentacles. The creature was huge with a red body made out of three parts and on top of its head were eight long and thin smoking chimneys. The creature roared and swung one of the tentacles sideway towards the group. Sora and Alice jumped over it while Donald and Goofy ducked as low as possible. The Red Queen opened its mouth and fired sickly green projectiles at the group.

'Protectga!' Sora and Donald cried in unison, throwing an energy shield over them. The projectiles hit the shield and shattered it completely, hitting Sora's party entirely. When the dust settled, everyone were lying face first into the ground. They moaned and slowly got onto their fours. The Red Queen did not allow them anytime to recover. She lifted one of the tentacles and brought it down on the platform where the group stood. The platform split in half, causing Alice and Sora to be catapulted onto the next platform while Donald and Goofy flew backwards onto the next.

Sora quickly pushed himself up as Alice joined him. 'Split up!' he cried to Donald and Goofy. 'Make it confuse and attack it at every angle!'

Donald and Goofy acknowledged him and ran to the opposite direction, Donald firing magical missiles at the Red Queen while Goofy provided him cover. Sora and Alice stood their ground and defended themselves from any tentacles that came their way. Sora and Alice hacked and slashed any tentacles that were swung at them, no matter their sizes. Goofy deflected an incoming projectile, giving Donald enough time to concentrate all his magic on his staff, lifted it up and fired at the creature's head. The Red Queen roared in pain and stopped attacking Sora and Alice. However, once the dust settled, the Red Queen was not affected by Donald's attack roared loudly and angry. It opened its mouth skyward and spat out flaming projectiles into the sky. The projectiles slowly descended on the ring of platforms and the only thing the party could do was to cast a magical shield over them. The flaming projectiles blasted all the platforms with devastating effects, causing massive dust clouds. It took a while before the dust settled; revealing four ominous still

bodies. Sora lifted himself painfully up and his heart dropped when he saw Alice lying there, unmoving. He dragged himself until he reached her side. He forced himself onto his feet and dragged the both of them behind a rock that was jutting out of the platform before another of the Red Queen's missiles could hit them. Sora took a breather until he heard a soft groan from Alice. His spirit rising, he gently but firmly shook Alice.

'Alice!' he whispered urgently. 'Please, wake up!'

Alice moaned again and slowly opened her green eyes. She murmured, 'Sora…'

'I'm here!' Sora replied softly. 'Are you hurt?'

Alice shook her head but she looked troubled. She sat up next to Sora, leaning against the rock, and said, 'I'm fine it just that… It's hopeless Sora! She's too powerful! We can't beat her!'

Sora looked into her eyes. 'Don't give up Alice! We can do it!'

Alice looked scornfully at him. 'Easy for you to say! You're the Hero of Light while I'm just a murderer… An orphan… And a crazy lunatic who can't even tell the difference between reality and fantasy!'

Sora looked deep into her eyes and fiercely said, 'You're Alice Liddell, an ordinary girl who happened to stumbled into Wonderland and made a lot of friends. You're also one of the Princesses of Hearts whom I rescued from Hollow Bastion! Now, standing right in front of me is a strong-willed and determined young woman who is fighting for justice and for her freedom! No matter what grief you cause and what monstrosity you committed, you're still the same Alice everyone knows and loved! If anybody can bring this world back to the way it is, YOU ARE!'

Alice looked at Sora, her spirits rising as well. 'Do you honest believe I can do it?'

Sora nodded. 'Believe in yourself, think of everybody who is supporting us and think of those who need you!' He stood up and instead of his hand; he extended his Key-Blade for her to reach. 'Let's defeat the Red Queen together!'

Alice looked up at him and nodded. As soon as she touched Kingdom Key, she was enveloped by light. She gasped as she felt warmth overflowing her body. 'What's happening to me?'

Sora grinned. 'Like I said: no matter how much you had changed, you're still Alice and one of the Princesses of the Heart.'

Alice stood up with new purpose and holding the Kingdom Key together with Sora, allowed herself to be engulfed by the light. The Red Queen noticed that they were still standing and flung one of its tentacles. Sora and Alice stood there defiantly and readied the glowing Kingdom Key. Before the tentacle could reach them, Alice and Sora swung Kingdom-Key sideway. The Key-Blade sliced the tentacle in half, destroying the whole thing. The Red Queen screeched in pain and furiously opened its mouth: firing a beam of magical energy towards the couple. Sora and Alice concentrated the Light's power at the tip of the Key-Blade and fired. The beam of light met the Red Queen's beam and collided, pushing each other in the other directions. At first the Red Queen's beam gained the upper-hand in the deadlock but Sora and Alice put everyone whom they are fighting for into their heads and put more effort into their attack. The light pushed the magical beam back towards the Red Queen and it exploded into its face. Once the explosion subsided, the Red Queen went limp, and then twitches and thrashed violently. Without warning, it exploded; scattering limbs, organs and blood all over the place. Donald and Goofy, who were lying still on the other side of the battlefield, slowly woke up as blood and guts showered all over them. Sora and Alice were wise to hide behind the rocks to avoid getting splattered red. Once it subsided, Sora and Alice poked their heads up and saw that the Red Queen was utterly destroyed.

'Oh my god…' Alice whispered, not believing what had just happened. Then she whirled to Sora and grinned. 'We did it! We kill

the Red Queen! We save Wonderland! We save… myself!'

Sora laughed and both of them hug, without knowing it. They looked embarrassed as they stared at each other and blushed. Before they could break away, Donald and Goofy, who ran from the other side, joined in the hug: shouting congratulations and tightening the hug. Sora looked at Alice and shrugged and grinned. Alice smiled back and tightened her hold on Sora. After squeezing the life out of each other, they broke their embrace and saw the platforms glimmering.

Donald quacked. 'What's going on?'

Beneath their feet, they saw the barren ground turning into healthy, green grass while the darkness slowly dispersed: revealing a blue sky. For some reason, they found themselves in a green field surrounded with beautiful flowers, lusty trees and brilliant blue sky.

Wondering where they are, they heard a chorused shout, 'Yes, Alice! You've saved us all!'

They turned towards the voice and to their surprise, they saw all their friends in front of them: waving and smiling at them. The Cheshire cat was sitting on a rock, grinning his usual grin, the White Rabbit was checking his pocket-watch, Caterpillar was smoking his hookah, the Mad Hatter was leaning against his staff, the Mocking Turtle and Bill were drinking brandy. Above them hovered Gryphon, healthy and in good shape.

Alice strode forward with Sora, Donald and Goofy behind her, tears in her eyes. 'Everyone, how…'

'Questioning the unknown will only turned your brain upside down.' The Cheshire cat answered her, grinning widely.

Goofy stretched his arms in a dramatic way. 'You're all alive!'

Donald cringed at the Mad Hatter, who noticed his reaction and smiled. 'I'm no longer a foe, once I was. When Alice here destroyed

the Red Queen, I'm back to whom I'm used to be.'

'Well done Alice!' Gryphon congratulated. 'We all knew you could do it!'

'Wonderland is saved.' Caterpillar inputted, puffing out smokes. 'And so is your sanity Alice. Now, we're truly free.'

'Let's celebrate with some brandy!' Bill cried as he brandished the brandy bottle.

'Yeah!' the Mock Turtle said drunkenly.

The White Rabbit hopped forward until he was in front of Alice. 'You're just in time.'

Alice smiled as she hugged her friend. Sora, Donald and Goofy beamed as Alice was turning back into the Alice they knew. Then they noticed something big and red behind the group: it was their Gummi Ship. Sora cast a questioning glance at the Cheshire cat. It shrugged.

'Hoping you could spend more time with us, I believe it's time to say adieu.'

Sora sadly nodded. They done what they always had done, saving a world from darkness. Donald and Goofy exchanged their farewells with the others as Sora turned back to Alice. They stood there, staring at each other deeply into their eyes, green meeting blue. Then Alice clasped hands with Sora and pulled him closer to her. Before Sora knew it, they were hugging again. Sora, surprise, was about to pull away when he felt they were no awkwardness between them. Slowly, he wrapped his arms around her and they stood there for a while. He ignored the whistling from Goofy and the snickering from the Cheshire cat. They broke the embrace but Alice still had her face buried in his chest, unwilling to let him go.

'Please…' her voice muffled. 'Please stay. I… I want you by my side. You're the only one who makes me smile, the only person who understands me. You… You're my only friend here. So please…'

Sora gently lifted her face, tears streaming down from her emerald eyes. Sora looked into her and had some feelings for her. Before he could say anything, he heard a cough behind him. He turned his head over his shoulders and looked at his two friends: Goofy wearing a worried look while Donald shook his head in disapproval. Sora thought back of his girlfriend, Kairi, waiting for him back on Destiny Island: her smile, her laughter, and her presence.

Like Alice, Sora was overcome with guilt of leaving Kairi for Alice. He had feelings for Alice but his love for Kairi was greater.

He wiped the tears from Alice's eyes and he whispered, 'Alice, thank you. I too share the same feelings with you. But,' he continued on apologetically. 'I have worlds and people to save. And… There's someone faithfully waiting for me back home. It will be wrong to break her heart if I stay here. Alice, you're not alone here. You have friends. The Cheshire cat, Rabbit, Caterpillar and the others are here for you so you won't be alone here. I promise that I will visit you sometimes. Please understand.'

Alice eyes became tearful but she nodded, reluctant but understanding. Sora allowed her to cup his face in her hands and let them dropped until they met each other hands. She squeezed his hands and let go.

'Good-bye Sora.' She whispered. 'Please come back.'

Sora nodded. 'I promise. Take care of yourself and Wonderland.'

Alice nodded as Sora strode towards the Gummi Ship. Goofy and Donald followed him and entered the ship. The door closed and soon, the Gummi Ship was in the air. The Gummi Ship increased pace until it disappeared into the white clouds. Their friends waved farewells as the Gummi Ship rose higher into the sky. Alice stayed

behind the group and raised her hand and started waving along with the others, tears freely flowing down her cheeks like her statue in the Vales of Tears.